DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 418 162 UD 032 221

AUTHOR Shevitz, Linda Pollack; Shaffer, Susan Morris
TITLE Women's Journeys, Women's Stories: In Search of Our Multicultural Future. Units in U.S. Women's History. Student Manual.
INSTITUTION Educational Development Center, Inc., Newton, MA. WEEA Equity Resource Center.
SPONS AGENCY Department of Education, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE 1997-00-00
NOTE 279p.; For the accompanying "Teacher Guide," see UD 032 220.
AVAILABLE FROM Women's Educational Equity Act Resource Center, Educational Development Center, Inc., 55 Chapel Street, Newton, MA 02158-1068; toll-free phone: 800-225-3088; world wide web: http://www.edc.org/WomensEquity
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom - Learner (051)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC12 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS American Indians; Asian Americans; *Curriculum; *Females; *Futures (of Society); Guides; Hispanic Americans; Immigrants; Intermediate Grades; Jews; Junior High School Students; Junior High Schools; Middle Schools; Multicultural Education; *United States History; *Womens Studies
IDENTIFIERS Middle School Students; United States (South)

ABSTRACT

This collection of curriculum units in U.S. history tells some of the untold women's stories that describe some of the historical events and social settings of the past and illustrate some trends for the future. These stories are intended to encourage middle school and junior high school students to explore contemporary women's history themes that correlate with themes previously highlighted in "In Search of Our Past," also from the Women's Educational Equity Act Resource Center. Three main units on contemporary topics are presented in both the "Teacher's Guide" and this "Student Manual." Each unit contains an introduction to the topic and background on the topic, profiles of individual women, interviews with individual women, readings about the unit topic, student activities, selected resources, and a vocabulary (some units). Units are presented on native women, women of the South (southern United States), and immigrant women, and these units encompass sections on the following cultural or historical groups: (1) American Indian women; (2) native Hawaiian women; (3) women of the South (from Civil War to civil rights); (4) Gullah women; (5) immigrant women; (6) Latinas; (7) Soviet Jewish women; and (8) contemporary women from Southeast Asia (Vietnamese). (SLD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 418 162

Women's Journeys, Women's Stories

In Search of Our Multicultural Future

Student Manual

Linda Pollack Shevitz
Susan Morris Shaffer
Project Directors

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Julia Potter
ACCEA
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
1

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Student Manual

WOMEN'S JOURNEYS, WOMEN'S STORIES

In Search of Our Multicultural Future

Units in U.S. Women's History

Project Directors

Linda Pollack Shevitz
Maryland State Department of Education

and

Susan Morris Shaffer
Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium

WEEA Equity Resource Center
Education Development Center, Inc.

This curriculum is divided into two volumes, a *Teacher Guide* and its companion *Student Manual*.

To order additional sets of *Women's Journeys, Women's Stories* contact *WEEA*/EDC, P. O. Box 1020, Sewickley, PA 15143-1020, or (800) 793-5076.

Discrimination Prohibited: No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance, or be so treated on the basis of sex under most education programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance.

This material was developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, under the auspices of the *Women's Educational Equity Act*. The *WEEA* Equity Resource Center operates under contract #RP92136001 from the Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Department should be inferred.

1997
Women's Educational Equity Act
(*WEEA*) Resource Center
Education Development Center, Inc.
55 Chapel Street
Newton, Massachusetts 02158-1060

Book design by Word Wizards, Chevy Chase, Maryland

Original illustrations by Denny Bond

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Project Team gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the following individuals and organizations:

- The women whose interviews are included in these units for openly sharing their inspirational journeys and stories of courage and determination—Elizabeth R. Leading Fox-Black Owl, Kathaleen Salmon Daniels, Geraldine Smith Howell, Lokelani Lindsey, Genevieve Nahulu, Mary A. Jackson, Helen Matthews Lewis, Ella Butler Scarborough, Vertamae Smart-Grosvenor, Eva Wright, Ida Milner, Socorro Herrera, Ana Sol Gutierrez, Carmen Delgado Votaw, Inna Giller, Faina Vaynerman, Galina Borodkina, Margarita Kononova, Jennifer Noznitsky, Huong Tran Nguyen, Thanh Van Anderson, Mary Jo Thu Nguyen, Nha N. Nguyen.

- The Maryland State Department of Education, the Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium, the Curriculum Transformation Project at the University of Maryland at College Park, and the National Women's History Project for their continuing support.

- The students and teachers who field-tested unit materials.

- The many individuals and organizations who contributed to the content development of specific units:

  Native Women Unit: Jen Shunatona Cale, Stacey Eaton, B. C. EchoHawk, Terza Garcia, Bonnie Nahulu, Helen Norris, Noelani Schilling.

  Women of the South Unit: Mary A. Jackson for weaving baskets and weaving tales, Julie Dash for taking us on a journey in her beautiful film, *Daughters of the Dust*, the McKissick Museum in South Carolina for preserving Gullah history and culture, Eva Wright and Vertamae Smart-Grosvenor for sharing their stories and their hearts, Si Kahn and Grassroots Leadership, the Highlander Research and Education Center, Bonnie Thornton Dill, Pat Arno, *Southern Exposure*.

  Immigrant Women Unit: U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, Bureau of the Census, Maryland Office for New Americans, New York Association for New Americans, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, National Conference on Soviet Jewry, Charles E. Smith Day School, Baltimore Jewish Services, Natasha Stonov, Sara Rose, Michelle Berman, Sandra Yamate, National Association for the Education and Advancement of Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese Americans, Karen Narasaki, Ngoc-Diep Thi Nguyen, Organization of Pan Asian American Women.

PERMISSIONS TO REPRINT

Appreciation is given to the following for granting permission to reprint materials used throughout the units:

TEACHER GUIDE

Immigrant Women: Teacher Introduction

Indiana University Press for permission to print excerpts from *From the Other Side: Women, Gender and Immigrant Life in the U.S., 1820–1990*, Donna Gabaccia, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, IN, 1994.

Immigrant Women: Soviet Jewish Women

Many Cultures Publishing for permission to print excerpts from *Jews from the Former U.S.S.R. in the United States*, Steven J. Gould and Mia Tuan, New Faces of Liberty Series, Many Cultures Publishing, San Francisco, CA, 1993.

STUDENT MANUAL

General

Random House, Inc. for permission to use quotes from *Wouldn't Take Nothing for My Journey Now*, Maya Angelou, Random House, New York, NY, 1993.

Photographs and Graphics

Additional credits are listed individually throughout the manual for each photograph and graphic reprinted from published materials.

Women of the South: Gullah Women

Muriel M. Branch for permission to reprint photographs from *The Water Brought Us: The Story of the Gullah People*, Muriel Miller Branch, Cobblehill Books, New York, NY, 1995.

The New Press for permission to print excerpts from *The Making of an American Woman's Film: Daughters of the Dust*, Julie Dash, The New Press, New York, NY, 1990.

Immigrant Women: Latino Women

Susan Bergholz Agency, New York, NY, for permission to reprint "My Name" from *The House on Mango Street*, Sandra Cisneros, reprinted in *Mexican American Literature*, Virginia Seeley, ed., Vintage Books, New York, NY, 1993.

The Feminist Press for permission to reprint photographs from *Moving the Mountain: Women Working for Social Change*, Ellen Cantarow, The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, New York, NY, 1980.

Immigrant Women: Soviet Jewish Women

Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society for permission to reprint student artwork from 1995 HIAS Calendar, New York, NY.

Hyperion Press for permission to print excerpts from *No Words to Say Goodbye*, Raimonda Kopelnitsky and Kelli Pryor, Hyperion Books, New York, NY, 1994. Copyright © 1994 Raimonda Kopelnitsky and Kelli Pryor.

Immigrant Women: Vietnamese Women

Greenfield Review Press for permission to print excerpts from *On the Other Side of the War, A Story*, Elizabeth Gordon; first published in *Home to Stay—Asian American Women's Fiction*, Sylvia Watanabe and Carol Bruchac, eds., Greenfield Review Press, New York, NY, 1990.

Vietnamese PEN for permission to reprint "The First Day of School" from *Wave and Exile: A Vietnamese Anthology*, Nguyen Ngoc Bich, ed., East Coast VISA, San Francisco, CA, 1989.

WOMEN'S JOURNEYS, WOMEN'S STORIES PROJECT TEAM

DIRECTOR	*Linda Pollack Shevitz* Maryland State Department of Education
CO-DIRECTOR	*Susan Morris Shaffer* Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium
UNIT DEVELOPMENT:	
NATIVE WOMEN	
American Indian Women	*Gwen Shunatona* ORBIS Associates
Native Hawaiian Women	*Linda Andrade Wheeler* Successories of Hawaii
WOMEN OF THE SOUTH	
From Civil War to Civil Rights	*Jill Moss Greenberg* Equity Consultant *Susan Morris Shaffer* Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium
Gullah Women	*Diane Yarbro Swift* Montgomery County, MD Public Schools
IMMIGRANT WOMEN	
The Experience of Immigrant Women	*Linda Pollack Shevitz* Maryland State Department of Education
Latino Women	*María del Rosario (Charo) Basterra* Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium
Soviet Jewish Women	*Linda Pollack Shevitz* Maryland State Department of Education
Vietnamese Women	*Sara Parrott* Howard County, MD Public Schools
WOMEN'S RIGHTS MOVEMENT: A MULTICULTURAL VIEW	*Deborah Rosenfelt* Curriculum Transformation Project, University of Maryland at College Park
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT:	
BOOK DESIGN	*Ilana Gordon, Ruth Moyer* Word Wizards, Inc.
WORD PROCESSING	*Maggie Green* Maryland State Department of Education *Ransom Washington* Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium
ILLUSTRATIONS	*Denny Bond*
EDITING	*Mary Ruthsdotter* National Women's History Project
ADDITIONAL MATERIALS	*Michelle Berman, Sara Rose, Natasha Stonov, Sandra Yamate*

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1

UNIT 1: NATIVE WOMEN

American Indian Women

Introduction and Background 9
"Look to the East" 9
Beginning the Journey 11
The Medicine Wheel Journey 12
Gifts of the Four Directions 14
Activities:
Goal Setting 15
Medicine Wheel 17
Leading the Way 19
Leadership for the Future 23
Interviews with Pawnee Women Leaders 25
Activities:
Decision Making for the Seventh Generation 35
First Talking Circle 36
Second Talking Circle 37
Selected Student Resources 39

Native Hawaiian Women

Introduction and Background 43
Profiles:
Lokelani Lindsey 49
Genevieve Akana Nahulu 51
Activity: Women of Hawaii 53
Selected Student Resources 55

UNIT 2: WOMEN OF THE SOUTH

From Civil War to Civil Rights

Introduction and Background 61
Vocabulary 65
Profile: Lorraine Hansberry (1930–1965) 67
Activities:
Dream Makers: Interpretation of a Dream 69
Interview Questions for Women Writers in Your Community 70
Make a Book 72
Profile: Lucy Randolph Mason (1882–1959) 73
Activity: Biography Activity Form 77

UNIT 2: WOMEN OF THE SOUTH (CONTINUED)

From Civil War to Civil Rights (continued)

Profile: Helen Matthews Lewis 79
Activity: Southern Women: Music Makes a Difference 85
Profile: Ella Butler Scarborough 89
Activity: Ella Butler Scarborough: Leading for Civil Rights 95
Selected Student Resources 97

Gullah Women

Introduction and Background 103
Daughters of the Dust 105
Activities:
Journeys 107
"I Can't Hear You": Sharing Your Voice 108
The Gift of Story 110
The Journey of Two 111
Interviews:
Vertamae Smart-Grosvenor 112
Eva Wright 115
Mary A. Jackson: Basketmaker 117
Activities:
Culture and Crafts 121
"I am Sapelo" by Cornelia Bailey 122
Selected Student Resources 123

UNIT 3: IMMIGRANT WOMEN

The Experience of Immigrant Women

Introduction and Background 129
Vocabulary 131
Activities:
What Is It Like . . . ? 133
K-W-L 135
Resources for New Immigrants 136
Wishes for the New Year 138
Interview: Becoming a Citizen: New American Citizen Ida Milner 141
Activities:
Becoming a Citizen 147
Alike and Different 148
Connections 149
Oral History Interview: Immigrant Women 150
Oral History: Interview Guidelines 152
Selected Student Resources 153

UNIT 3: IMMIGRANT WOMEN (CONTINUED)

Latino Women

Introduction and Background 157
Latino Presence in the United States 158
Mexican Americans 160
Puerto Ricans 161
Cubans 162
Other Immigrants from the Caribbean, Central, and South America 163
Migrant Latino Women 164
Activity: Latinos and Jobs 165
Interview: Memories of a Migrant Woman: Socorro Herrera 167
Activity: Memories of a Migrant Woman 175
Profile: Dolores Huerta 177
Activity: Dolores Huerta 183
Profile: Ana Sol Gutierrez 185
Activity: Ana Sol Gutierrez 193
Interview: Carmen Delgado Votaw 195
Activity: Carmen Delgado Votaw 201
Literature: "My Name" from *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros 203
Activity: "My Name" 205
Selected Student Resources 207

Soviet Jewish Women

Introduction and Background 211
Activities:
In the News 213
Raimonda's Diary 214
Literature: Diaries of Raimonda Kopelnitsky 215
Activity: Diaries of Raimonda Kopelnitsky 219
Interviews:
Faina Vaynerman and Inna Giller 221
Galina Borodkina 227
Margarita Kononova 231
Jennifer Noznitsky 233
Activities:
Reflections: Voices of Soviet Jewish Women 235
World Immigration Web 236
What America Means to Me 238
Selected Student Resources 239

UNIT 3: IMMIGRANT WOMEN (CONTINUED)

Vietnamese Women

Introduction and Background 243
Activity: Journey to an Unknown Land 249
Interview: Huong Tran Nguyen 253
Activity: Huong Tran Nguyen 259
Interview: Thanh Van Anderson 261
Activity: Thanh Van Anderson 265
Interview: Mary Jo Thu Nguyen 267
Activity: Mary Jo Thu Nguyen 271
Interview: Nha Nguyen 273
Activities:
- Nha Nguyen 277
- Voices from Vietnam 279

Literature:
- Dust of Life 281
- "On the Other Side of the War: A Story" by Elizabeth Gordon 282

Activity: Dust of Life 287
Literature: "The First Day of School" by Truong Anh Thuy 289
Activities:
- "The First Day of School" 293
- Names and Holidays 295

Selected Student Resources 299

PERSONAL JOURNEYS AND STORIES

Conclusion 303
Activities:
- Circle of Strength 305
- Write or Draw Your Questions and Reflections 307

These curriculum units in United States Women's History are dedicated to the remarkable women whose stories are told in these pages and to the women everywhere whose journeys they represent.

INTRODUCTION: WHY WAS THIS BOOK WRITTEN? WHAT IS THIS BOOK ABOUT?

Build a bridge, walk across, reach out to another human being.

—Maya Angelou

Many books about the history of our country contain little information about the ways women of many different cultures have contributed to all areas of life in the United States. *Women's Journeys, Women's Stories: In Search of Our Multicultural Future* is a collection of U.S. history units about the contributions of individual women and groups of women to American life in modern times.

Women's history has often been told through the stories of not only famous women but of *everyday* women who shape our world in many ways. Each woman's experience may be thought of as a journey. The word *journey* may mean a trip to a different place, but also a particular path or a way a woman or groups of women have chosen to live their lives and contribute to history.

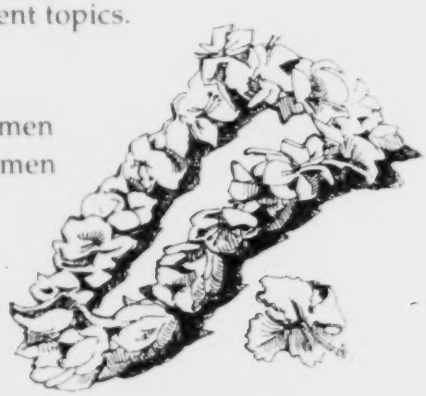
This book tells the stories of several women who overcame barriers to achieve success. We must remember that there are many women of diverse cultures in the United States who have struggled and continue to struggle every day with issues of sexism, racism, and oppression. Each woman's journey is affected in different ways by her unique experience and the period of history in which she lives. The term *history* refers not only to events of the past but also to events of the present that will help determine what the world of the future will be like.

Women's Journeys, Women's Stories provides ideas, information, and activities to help you explore the experiences of modern women from many different cultures. The United States is a **multicultural** nation, where we learn to value the ways in which people are different and to appreciate the ways in which people are alike. Individuals from hundreds of different countries and from Native American tribes have made important contributions throughout our history. These units present information about only a few of these contributions.

HOW IS THIS BOOK ORGANIZED?

UNITS AND SECTIONS

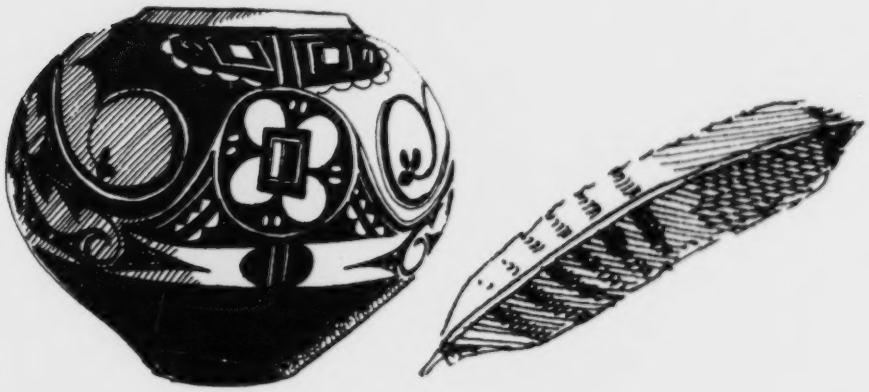
The book is divided into three **Units** about contributions of women to U.S. history. Each **Unit** contains **Sections** on different topics.



UNIT 1 NATIVE WOMEN
- Section 1 American Indian Women
- Section 2 Native Hawaiian Women

UNIT 2 WOMEN OF THE SOUTH
- Section 1 From Civil War to Civil Rights
- Section 2 Gullah Women

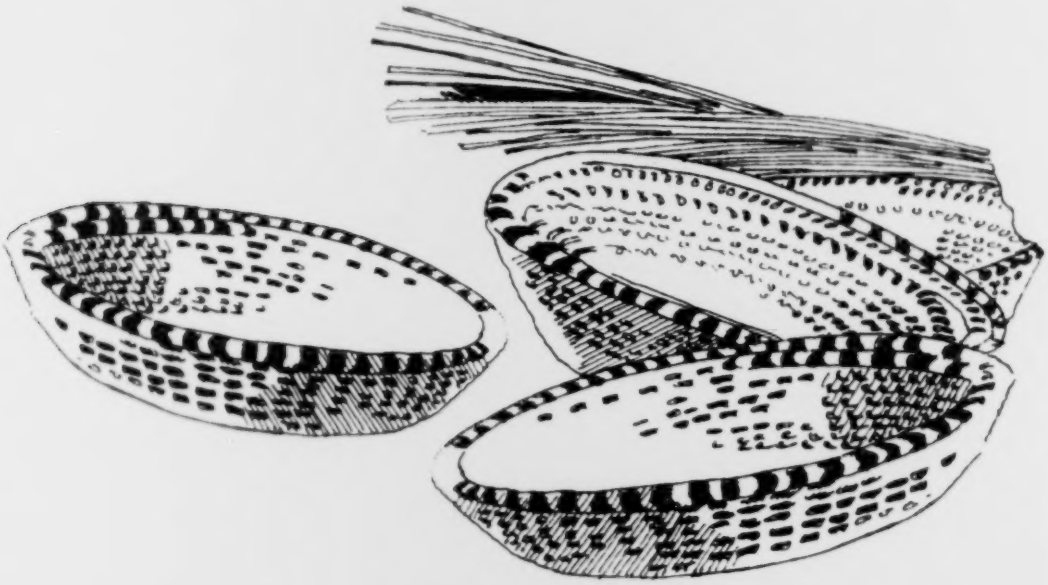
UNIT 3 IMMIGRANT WOMEN
- Section 1 The Experience of Immigrant Women
- Section 2 Latino Women
- Section 3 Soviet Jewish Women
- Section 4 Vietnamese Women



FORMAT OF UNITS

Each unit includes the following parts, which are labeled on the top of each page and identified by a symbol on shaded tabs on page borders:

- INTRODUCTION
- BACKGROUND FOR STUDENTS—Information about the unit topic
- PROFILES—Information about individual women
- INTERVIEWS—Interviews with individual women
- LITERATURE—Readings about the unit topic (included in some units)
- STUDENT ACTIVITIES—Things to do or discuss
- SELECTED RESOURCES—Titles of resources to help you find out more about the unit topic
- VOCABULARY—Words to know (included in some units)



WHAT DOES THIS BOOK INVITE YOU TO DO?

Women's Journeys, Women's Stories invites you to find out more about the women in your own community, in addition to learning about the women whose stories are told in these units. Millions of women from every background, every region, every race, every religion, every class, and from many different nations contribute every day to our history in the United States. You are also invited to explore your own stories and journeys and those of your family and friends.

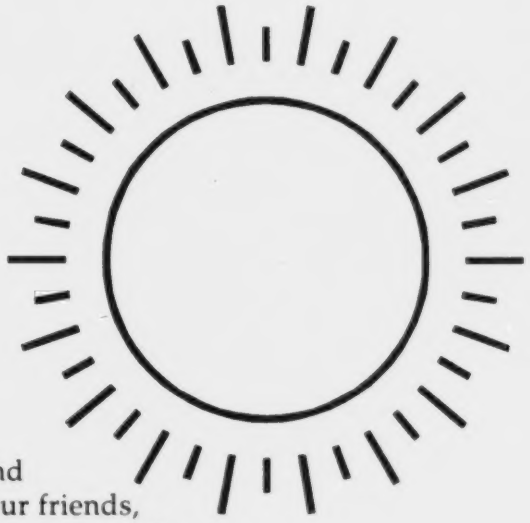
UNIT 1
Native Women

- American Indian Women
- Native Hawaiian Women

Native Women

- **American Indian Women**

INTRODUCTION



"LOOK TO THE EAST"

With each sunrise,
Look to the East.
As the sun rises in the East —
Greet the day!

Greet the day,
So that you will have the power
to appreciate the good parts of the day, and
so you can reflect those good things to your friends,
or, maybe, to some unknown person whose eyes need to
be opened by your reflection of the sun.

Look to the East.
As you face the East, know that because it is a place of protection,
you can think any type of thoughts —
then, if the thoughts are ugly, you can put them aside
so they won't hurt you or be used by you to hurt anyone else; and,
if the thoughts are funny or wonderful, you can keep them with you
for as long as you like, and share them with others whenever you like.

Look to the East,
So that in remembering the "gifts" of the East
you will carry them with you for the whole day, using them when
needed,
and, in greeting your friends, be able to "wish them gifts" for the day.

Look to the East, Greet the day, Look to the East, Greet the day.
Why is that so important?

Well, if we all just jump or drag out of bed without thinking,
How will we know to look for the day's good parts?
How will we recognize that the day has "gifts" for us?
Who will wish us "gifts" of the day?
Who will reflect the day's good parts?

Who will reflect the sun's happiness?
When you're having a hard time finding happiness to reflect,
Who will gather the strength to face the day's challenges?
Who will wish *you* the strength to meet the day's challenges?

So, look to the East, Greet the day, Look to the East, Greet the day.
Get it?

Greetings from
Tsi-tú-ra-ki-ríi-ka-wah

Assiniboine woman loading travois outside tepees. Detail of *A Skin Lodge of an Assiniboine Chief* by Karl Bodmer, The Newberry Library, Chicago, Edward E. Ayer Collection. SOURCE: *The World Book Encyclopedia*, World Book, Inc., Chicago, IL, 1989.

BEGINNING THE JOURNEY

OVERVIEW

"Look to the East" was written specially for you by a woman who is a proud descendant of one of the many indigenous groups of the continent now called America. These people are members of a distinct group who, in their own language, now call themselves *Chahiksichahiks*. In English, they are known now as the Pawnee Nation. Many of these individuals reside in the state now known as Oklahoma in the country now called the United States of America. You will learn more about these people later in this unit.

"Beginning the Journey" is the name of the section you are working on now. Think about the word *journey*. Using the gift of curiosity and your critical inquiry skills, you should be asking yourself questions such as

- Who is going on a trip?
- Is there only one traveler or more?
- What is the purpose of the trip?
- What is the destination of this journey?
- Will I get to go along?
- Can I take anyone with me?
- When is the trip?

The interesting part about this journey is that the route is a circle! So it shouldn't be too hard, right? Traveling in a circle doesn't usually get you very far though, does it? But, what if the circle were the earth's equator? Now *that* would take some time. Going around that circle would take you many, many places! Although we won't be traveling around the equator, if you're willing to take a mind journey, you'll find that as you "travel" you expand your horizons. Believe it? Believe it.

In this unit, you will journey to learn more about American Indian women, about the medicine wheel, and about women leaders within tribal nations today.

THE MEDICINE WHEEL JOURNEY

There are over 300 American Indian tribes and about 200 Alaska Native village communities in the United States, all of which have the political status known as "Federal Recognition." Each of these groups has its own social and political structure, music, language, and ways of doing things. Can you imagine hearing hundreds of different languages?

Despite these differences, many tribal groups do share some very important ways, such as the way they look at life and the way they try to understand it.

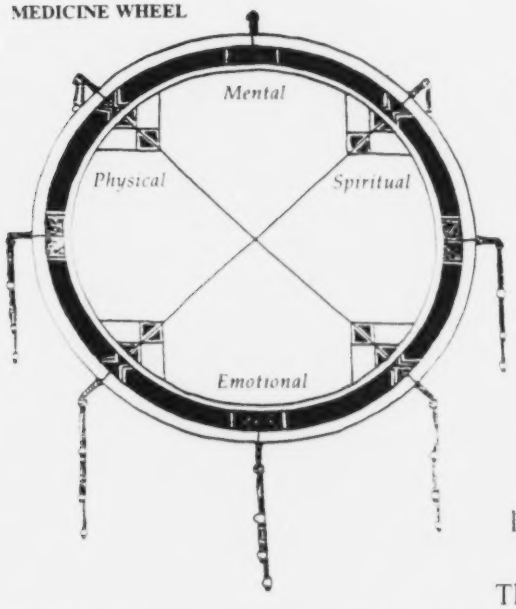
If you weren't you . . . Is that a ridiculous thought, or does it sound as if it might be fun to think about? If you weren't you, and whoever you *were* looked at your life, is it a life you would want to lead?

In order to see your life as something appealing, or to change something about yourself or your environment, you need a frame of reference, and maybe even a tool.

All cultures have symbols. Symbols are tools that represent something that provides purpose and understanding in the lives of human beings. One symbol used by almost all people of North and South America is a circle. Just as a mirror can be used to see things not normally visible (e.g., behind us or around a corner), a special circle can be used to help us see or understand things that are sometimes hard to understand—such as ideas, which are not physical objects.

Many Native people use a special circle called the Medicine Wheel. It's called that because just as medicine helps people regain their health, the Medicine Wheel can help people improve their characters and develop good use of their wills.

MEDICINE WHEEL



In order to use the Medicine Wheel for your journey, think of its circle as having four parts, just as people have four parts: a **spiritual** part, an **emotional** part, a **physical** part, and a **mental** part. Because the world has in it many negative things that can affect you or any part of you, each of your four parts must be equally developed. Each must be strong and vital. That way you can become a well-balanced person with a healthy "will"—a will to take responsibility for your life, your decisions, and your actions.

The trip or journey you are now being invited to take is symbolic of our daily quest to improve ourselves. Many tribal cultures teach each member of the tribal community to begin each day facing East, where the sun rises every day, and spend a few minutes actually greeting the day. This means you begin each day preparing yourself to be able to see and enjoy the good parts of the day and to have the strength to meet the challenges of the day. As young people, you especially need a personal, well-balanced approach to life that will keep you spiritually, emotionally, physically, and mentally healthy as an adult.

For this journey, you can use the Medicine Wheel as a map. It will allow you to begin your symbolic journey in the **East**, which is the protected area on the Medicine Wheel and represents a person's spiritual part. When you're ready to travel forward, head for the South. The **South** represents a person's emotional part and on the Medicine Wheel is an area designated for nourishing development. As you continue making your symbolic journey, go **West**, where you can experience growth in the physical part of your self. Then, when you are ready to enter the **North** rim of the Medicine Wheel, your mental part will find wholeness because you have completed the whole Medicine Wheel circle.

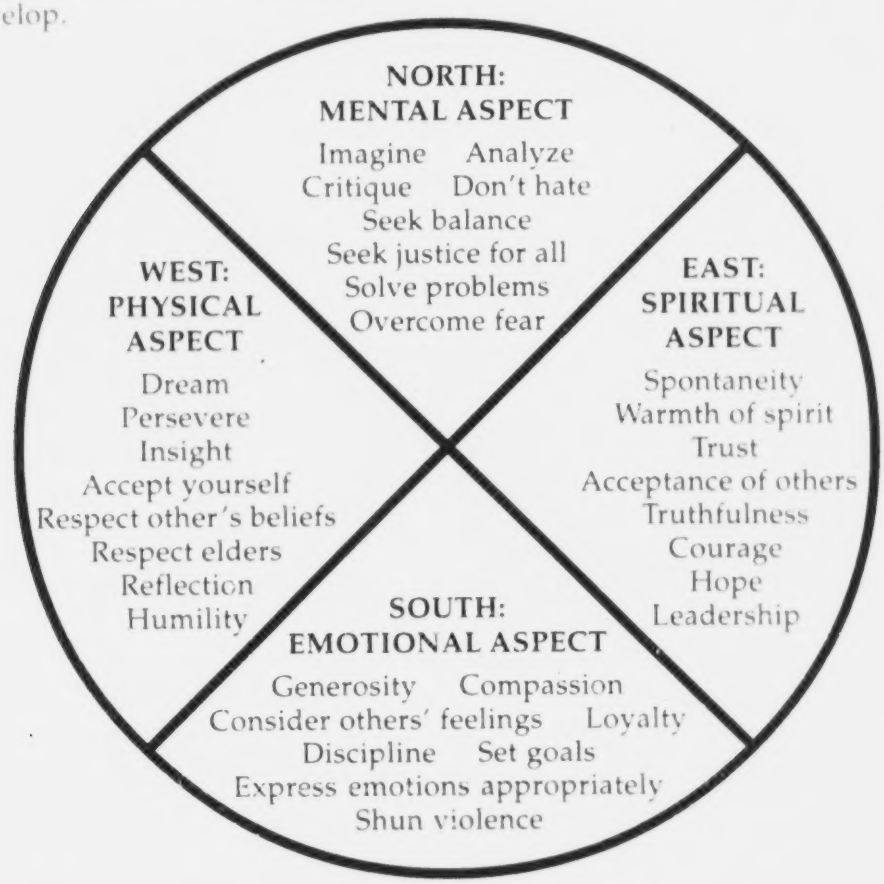
Adapted from *The Sacred Tree*, Judie Bopp, Michael Bopp, Lee Brown, and Phil Lane, Four Worlds Development Project, University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada, 1984.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

However, human nature being what it is, once around the circle is not enough. Humans constantly need improvement, so we constantly set goals, and after they are met we seek other goals—over and over again. The Medicine Wheel is a very good tool for helping us through this journey.

GIFTS OF THE FOUR DIRECTIONS

Each person has wonderful gifts hidden inside. As you journey around the Medicine Wheel, you can work on calling forth these gifts so they may help you become the person you want to be. Here is a list of some of the gifts you can try to develop.



Adapted from *The Sacred Tree*, Judie Bopp, Michael Bopp, Lee Brown, and Phil Lane, Four Worlds Development Project, University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada, 1984.

GOAL SETTING

DIRECTIONS

Use the information on the previous pages about the Medicine Wheel and the Gifts of the Four Directions to (1) identify your good qualities and (2) help strengthen your character.

- Make the Medicine Wheel yours by writing your name at the top right corner of the Medicine Wheel on page 17.
- Toward the top of the **Spiritual** quarter of the Wheel, write "My Gifts."
- From the list called "Gifts of the Four Directions," write all the gifts that you have under "My Gifts."
- To yourself, think how you use your "Gifts."
- In the **Spiritual** quarter of the Wheel, write "My Goals."
- Now, from the list of Gifts of the Four Directions, pick one "Gift" that you will strengthen over the next week. Then ask someone nearby to "wish you new gifts" by telling you "Good Luck," shaking your hand, or giving you a high five. Now, find a creative way to wish back "new gifts" to that person.

❖❖❖

- Repeat this process for each of the other three aspects of the Medicine Wheel: **emotional**, **physical**, and **mental**.

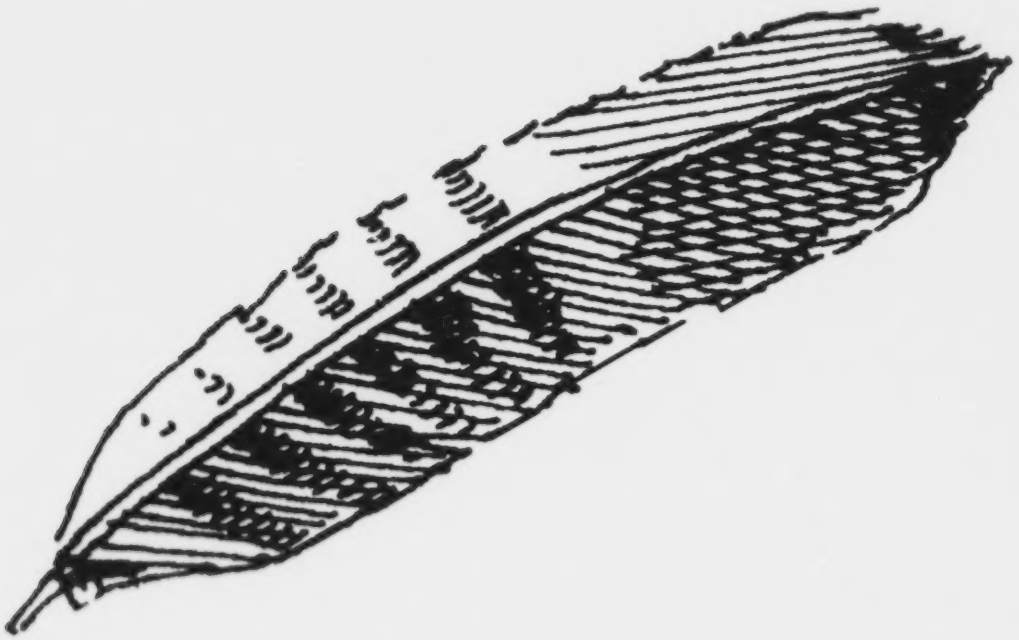
❖❖❖

- As you greet each day, if you have strengthened any of your gifts by using them, congratulate yourself. If you haven't used one or more gifts, resolve to use one this day. Then, while you are taking time to think your own thoughts, concentrate on and analyze the gift you will strengthen that day. Then, do it!

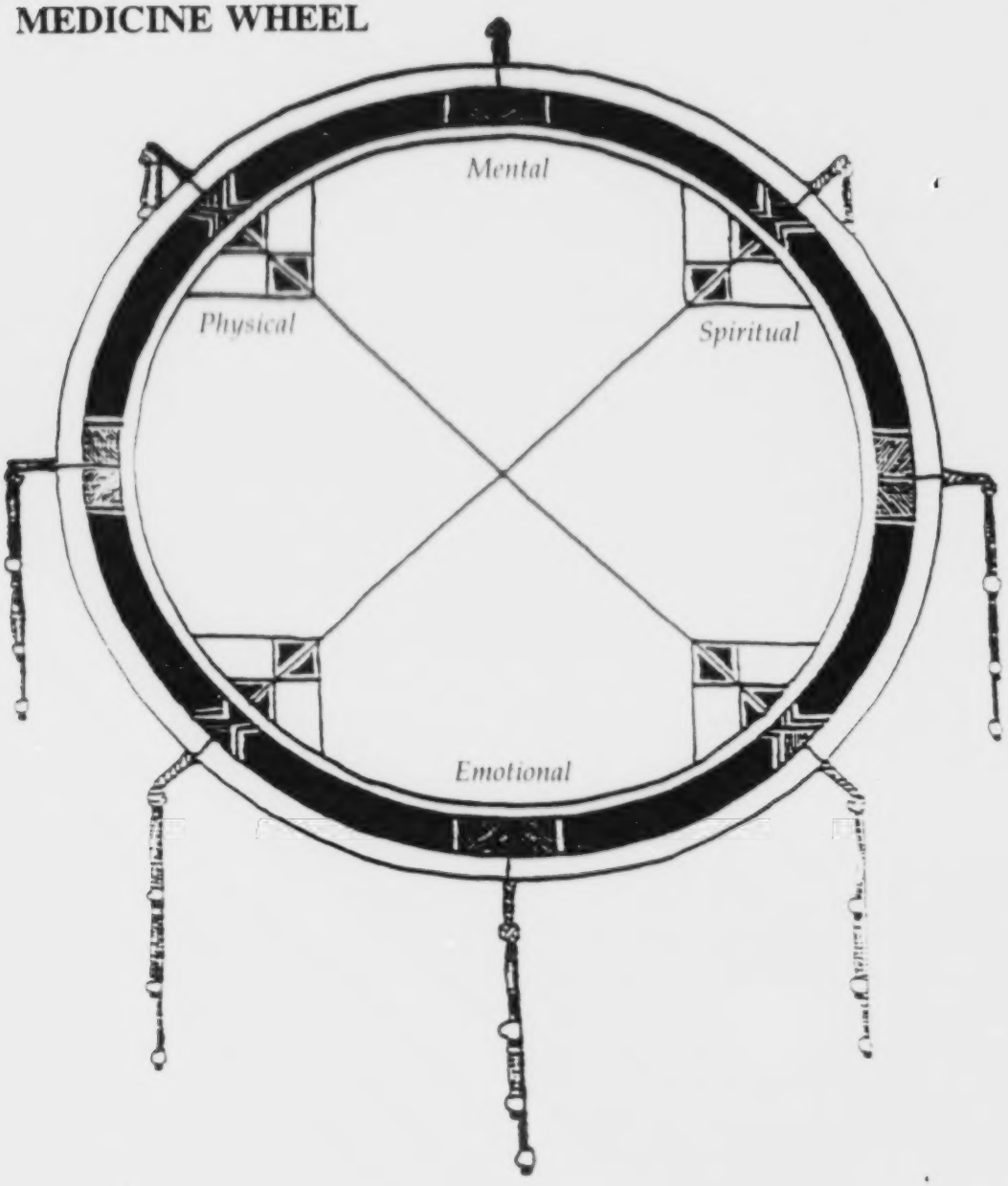
❖❖❖

- Each week, draw a star by the new gift you have and keep using it. Then, add another new one under "My Goals" and work on using it.

You are participating in a process called "Goal Setting." This activity will help you be more organized and productive. You need to be both of those if you want to be of good use to yourself and to any community you choose to live in as an adult.

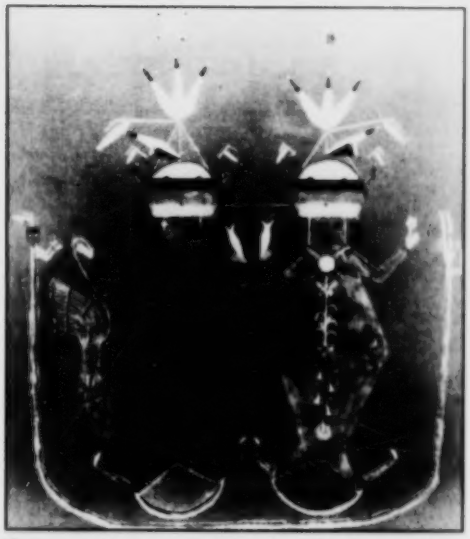


MEDICINE WHEEL



Adapted from *The Sacred Tree*, Judie Bopp, Michael Bopp, Lee Brown, and Phil Lane, Four Worlds Development Project, University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada, 1984.

LEADING THE WAY



OVERVIEW

Since the beginning of time, Native women have had many options for being productive members of their communities. They have served as leaders, mothers, medicine women, warriors, wives, and governing council members.

In Indian cultures, the status of women is shown in several ways that are related to the environment and religion. For example, tribal Nations still give thanks to the sustaining life force of the earth, which is still called Our Mother. The important food crops of corn, beans, and squash are called the Three Sisters. Other female titles of reverence and respect for figures important to various tribes include White Buffalo Calf Woman (Dakota); Deer Mother (Taos); Corn Mother (Hopi); Changing Woman (Navajo); Beloved Woman (Cherokee).

Native women have played much larger and more important historical roles than are usually portrayed in history books. Here are a few examples just during the time since America's history was first written down, that is, after 1492: The first spot in "the Americas" on which Christopher Columbus landed was the Taino Island of Bohio, now called Haiti/Dominican Republic. One of the most powerful Taino leaders was a woman named Anacaona. In 1540 the female leader known as the Lady of Cofitachequi, who was also the spokesperson for Native people of what is now Georgia, met Coronado, one of the best-known explorers for the Spanish. In the 1600s, women led two of the six Powhatan Nation villages that met with the English.

Navajo sandpainting of Father Sky and Mother Earth surrounded by Rainbow Girl, a symbol of protection.
SOURCE: *Women in American Indian Society*, Rayna Green, Chelsea House Publishers, New York, NY, 1992.

In seventeenth-century colonial Massachusetts, the leader of the Pocassets was a woman named Weetammo, and the female leader of the Narragansett people was Quaiapen, also known as Magnus.

August 13, 1868, is the date when the last of 370 treaties was signed between the U.S. government and tribes. This treaty relationship gave tribes a political status possessed by no other U.S. racial or ethnic group. Through these treaties, American Indian tribes forfeited land to the U.S. government in exchange for certain rights and services bestowed by the federal government. From this legal exchange, you can see that American Indians who are eligible for any benefits resulting from treaties do not receive any money or services on the basis of race or ethnicity. Rather, they receive benefits from the federal government as citizens of tribes or nations that have a unique *political* status.

Tribal Nations had many different kinds of governance prior to contact with non-Native peoples, and Native communities in some locations now operate governments that are very close to their original structures. Other tribal governments are bound by structures mandated in 1934 by U.S. federal legislation entitled the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA). Regardless of the form of tribal government, of the 555 tribal Nations with political status as Federally Recognized Tribes, about one-fifth have women as the heads of government.

Since the 1970s, the term *Native American* has come into frequent use as a designation for American Indians. Some people like that term because the term *American Indian* is really a misnomer. However, other people don't like the term *Native American*, because in federal legislation it usually includes groups that are *not* American Indian, such as Native Hawaiians, Native Guamanians, and Native Marianians. None of these groups has the same special political status as American Indians.

However, most tribal people of the United States, the rest of North America, Central America, and South America actually prefer to use their specific tribal names. Also, some have a preference for the name in the tribal language, such as *Chahiksichahiks*. Others accept the name in English, such as Pawnee in this case. In this unit, the tribal name will be used as much as possible; otherwise, the term *American Indian* or the word *Indian* will be used.

LEADING THE WAY

DIRECTIONS

Complete and discuss the items that follow.

1. Several tribal figures were named in the student background reading for this unit. List at least three of these women and their tribal names.

2. Can you name other women who played important roles in past U.S. history? Those named in the tribal examples are still revered; is that the case for the women you named? If, so, which? Are there any differences between the tribal women and the women you named? If, so, what? If, not, how are they alike?

3. Use your school library or the Internet to identify historical American Indian women. Read a biography or write a one-page description about one of the women you identify.

[Left to Right] Emily Pauline Johnson (Mohawk), Gertrude Simmons Bonnin (Sioux), Lizzie Cayuse (Nez Perce). SOURCE: *Women in American Indian Society*, Rayna Green, Chelsea House Publishers, New York, NY, 1992.

LEADERSHIP FOR THE FUTURE

Remember the sky you were born under,
know each of the star's stories . . .

Remember that you are all people
and that all people are you . . .

Remember
to remember.

—Joy Harjo
Native American (Creek) Poet

OVERVIEW

Today, over 100 Native women lead their tribal Nations as head of their governments. As with any community government official, these women and their respective governing bodies attend to business in the areas of education, economic development, health and safety, social service, housing, and construction.

A few years ago, a Cherokee professor at Harvard convened several Native women who, as elected officials, served their tribal Nations as Chiefs, as Chairs of their Tribal Business Committees, or members of their Nations' governing bodies. From this and subsequent symposia, Dr. Bette Haskins collected the following information on some contemporary female tribal leaders.

Mildred Cleghorn (Ft. Sill Apache in Oklahoma) has the distinction of being one of the first women elected as Chair of her tribe's Business Council.

Deborah Doxtator (Oneida in Wisconsin), like many of these leaders, has been recognized outside of her tribal community for her excellent leadership abilities. For serving as an outstanding leader of the Oneida team during the tribe's 1992 negotiation with the state of Wisconsin for a gaming compact, Vice Chair Doxtator received a Wise Woman award from the Center for Women Policy Studies.

Beatrice Gentry (Wampanoag of Gay Head in Massachusetts), now a highly respected elder, led her tribe in its initial seeking of Federal Recognition, which was then accomplished and acted upon during the administration of later Wampanoag Tribal Councils under the leadership of Chair Gladys Widdiss and others after her.

Leona Kakar (Ak-Chin in Arizona) negotiated land leases as collateral for a bank loan for farming equipment. This purchase allowed 125 employees to make enough money for the tribe to build a school, health and recreational facilities, a senior citizens center, and a tribal government administration building.

Sue Shaffer (Cow Creek Band of Umpqua in Oregon) successfully worked with city, state, and federal officials to establish a gaming operation that satisfies the requirements of all the various governments involved.

And, of course, Native women have always had and continue to hold spiritual leadership positions and often have the final word on tribal decision making.

PAWNEE WOMEN LEADERS

INTRODUCTION

The indigenous peoples of this continent and country have sometimes chosen, and other times been forced, to make changes. Some of these changes will be good for future generations. Some will not. Individuals also have decisions to make. Some have to do with immediate needs and others have to do with things that will have long-lasting effects. Much of the information in this unit is intended to help you make responsible decisions.

INTERVIEWS WITH PAWNEE WOMEN LEADERS

Sometimes, hearing how other people have prepared themselves for making good decisions and seeing the results of their decisions can be the best kind of help for learning that skill yourself. Knowing how someone else does something, comes to know something, or acts on what she or he wants to do can help you become confident enough to try new things yourself. You have to want to do the best you possibly can. And you have to be willing to take risks—but not foolish risks, of course. Believe it or not, smart risks help people improve themselves, and when people improve themselves, they improve the world.

To help you be a productive risk taker, three Pawnee women who serve on their Tribal Business Council agreed to tell you their stories. These stories will show you how these women are able to take the actions expected of them as tribal government officials. Their stories were collected through interviews in order to help you learn from these women and their experiences.

PROFILES OF PAWNEE NATION TRIBAL BUSINESS COUNCIL CHAIR AND FEMALE MEMBERS, APRIL 1996

Elizabeth R. Leading Fox-Black Owl

Pawnee Bands: *Kitkahahki; Pitahawirat(a); Skidi*
Council Position: Chair
Committees: Executive

Kathaleen Salmon Daniels

Pawnee Band: *Pitahawirat(a)*
Council Position: Member
Committees: Personnel, Law Enforcement, Constitution Revision, Gaming, Grant and Contracts

Geraldine Smith Howell

Pawnee Bands: *Pitahawirat(a)* from mother; *Skidi* from father
Council Position: Member
Committees: Health, Enrollment, Personnel

Note: In the Pawnee Nation, the traditional Chiefs' Council is called the Nasharo Chiefs' Council; in this curriculum unit material, the word *Council* refers only to the Tribal Business Council.

Elizabeth Leading Fox-Black Owl

Kathaleen Salmon Daniels

Geraldine Smith Howell

Why did you want to be a member of the Tribal Business Council of the Pawnee Nation?

Elizabeth R. Leading Fox-Black Owl: To help make positive changes in our tribal government. I want to rebuild the Pawnee Tribe's reputation as being a model in programs and services to our tribal community.

Kathaleen Salmon Daniels: Primarily to help my tribe move in a positive direction, to bring new ideas, and to help unite our members as one entity.

Geraldine Smith Howell: I am a retired nurse and will soon be sixty-eight years old. I have seven children, twelve grandchildren, one great-grandchild. To safeguard their future and that of other young Pawnees, I felt a desire to learn how the Council truly operated.

When you were in the eighth grade, what did you know about the Council and how it operated?

Elizabeth R. Leading Fox-Black Owl: I was fortunate to have personal knowledge of tribal Council functions since my father served on it for many years. My eighth grade was at the Pawnee Indian School, where we had close exposure to tribal functions, and often the Council members visited the students at lunchtime. I knew the members went on trips, which somehow greatly impressed me . . . maybe because, other than Pawnee, the only towns I had been to were in Oklahoma—Tulsa and Oklahoma City.

Kathaleen Salmon Daniels: To be honest, I did not know how the Council operated. I had the belief that the Council was the group of tribal members that made the decisions that ran our tribe. I have always been led to have respect for those on the Council.

Geraldine Smith Howell: When I was in the eighth grade I was in an Indian boarding school. I knew the Council existed, as my father, uncles, and cousins had all served as Councilmen, but beyond that I didn't know what the Council did.

How many years ago did you think about becoming a Council member?

Elizabeth R. Leading Fox-Black Owl: Women were not allowed to serve on the Business Council until the 1970s, and it was during this time that I became interested. Edith Roberts Beardsley and I were the first women to serve on the Business Council.

Kathaleen Salmon Daniels: Just since some controversies in 1990.

Geraldine Smith Howell: I originally ran for the Council in the mid-eighties and lost by only a few votes.

How did you prepare yourself to be a Council member?

Elizabeth R. Leading Fox-Black Owl: I'm not certain that I specifically prepared myself to be a Council member. The fact that I chose to obtain a college degree as well as a master's degree in social work has certainly allowed me opportunities and experience that enhance my abilities and skills in working with different groups of people and in various parts of the country. Perhaps I have been preparing myself for the Council by accepting a variety of challenges. A major goal of mine is to be true to my Pawnee culture and to apply all the beautiful customs and teachings to my experiences in relating to individuals and groups with which I have contact.

Kathaleen Salmon Daniels: I spoke to tribal employees, tribal and family members, and listened to their concerns. I gave serious consideration as to whether my experience and education would be of benefit to the tribe.

Geraldine Smith Howell: I have applied myself to learning how the Council operates and do not hesitate to ask questions to further my understanding of Tribal Government and federal programs.

Will you tell about any person who inspired you or motivated you to become a Council member and how that happened?

Elizabeth R. Leading Fox-Black Owl: My father, Albin Leading Fox, has been an inspiration to me all my life. The great man had an abundant love for his people—the Pawnee tribal members. He spent most of his life serving the Business Council. He respected all people and very seldom said negative things toward anyone. He was a very unselfish person and never expected payment for his endeavors.

Kathaleen Salmon Daniels: My mother, uncle, sisters, and husband were mainly instrumental in helping me make the decision to run for the Council. We spoke separately as well as in groups, discussing the pros and cons. Their belief in me that I could be successful as a Council member aided me in making my decision.

Geraldine Smith Howell: My husband and uncle were Council members and the people most influential to my decision to run were close friends and young adults who encouraged me to run as someone who would represent their views.

Members of the Blood women's Matoki Society, the Motokiks, put up meeting lodge in 1891. SOURCE: *Women in American Indian Society*, Rayna Green, Chelsea House Publishers, New York, NY, 1992.

Many people think about tribal government only as politics. The students who will read your interview will have just read about the Medicine Wheel and how to use its symbolism in helping them develop their characters. The next four questions are designed to encourage students to think about tribal leadership as service to the people.

As a Council member, what can you do to address people's spiritual needs?

Elizabeth R. Leading Fox-Black Owl: The Pawnee people have historically been religious people. I try to be a good example and encourage community activities and functions which would encourage our return to our Father, *Atiras*.

Kathaleen Salmon Daniels: I make it known that I was elected by tribal members to serve our tribe as a whole. I try to have elders, a member from the Nasharo Chiefs' Council, and individuals from various age groups and backgrounds on committees. I like the varied concept so that we all share our wisdom and experiences with one another, as this allows us to work together to accomplish goals and make a better life for our tribal members.

Geraldine Smith Howell: At our Council meetings we ask for guidance in making decisions that will affect all of our tribal members. To specifically address the peoples' spiritual needs, we turn to the Nasharo Chiefs' Council, a body whose specific goal is to deal with the traditional and spiritual needs of the Pawnee Tribe.

As a Council member, what can you do to address people's emotional needs?

Elizabeth R. Leading Fox-Black Owl: Historically, our families had strong support systems. There were no homeless families, and children were not neglected because our [clan system] provided for many mothers, grandmothers, and aunts to take children in and care for them, especially in times of need. When the community develops a trust and respect for Council members, community members will participate in tribal initiatives that will meet emotional needs, such as parenting classes and history classes from our elders. We need to focus on pride and self-esteem building because we have a beautiful heritage. We need more community-based programs so that people will be involved.

Kathaleen Salmon Daniels: I try to compliment tribal members and employees on their successes and to let them know I appreciate all their hard work and efforts. I try to keep tribal members informed on happenings and to keep the lines of communication open.

Geraldine Smith Howell: Our ability to inform our tribal members of the many social services available, such as under the Job Training Partnership Act, substance abuse prevention, and continuing education, which enable them to improve their quality of life.

As a Council member, what can you do to address people's physical needs?

Elizabeth R. Leading Fox-Black Owl: One of my objectives is to begin some focus on economic development, because our tribal members need employment. We have several young adults who will probably never leave the Pawnee area. We need jobs for them here at home. We also need to build on activities which encourage healthy people.

Kathaleen Salmon Daniels: By asking tribal members and employees to advise us of their concerns and opinions. I tell these individuals that I welcome and need their input. I feel that without input, I would not be serving tribal members to the best of my ability.

Geraldine Smith Howell: We continue to push for updated health care facilities for the Tribe, and we have recently opened a full-service gym in the hope that tribal members will practice preventive health care.

Pawnee shield with star symbol. SOURCE: *The Pawnee*, Dennis B. Fradin, Childrens Press, Chicago, IL, 1988.

As a Council member, what can you do to address people's mental needs?

Elizabeth R. Leading Fox-Black Owl: If I could accomplish some of the items mentioned above, the mental needs of our community would be met. I try to treat everyone as I want to be treated and I want to be forgiving and to always remember that none of us is perfect.

Kathaleen Salmon Daniels: I try to listen with an open mind, ask questions, state my viewpoint, and make my decisions based upon what I feel would be best for all concerned. I want the tribal members to feel they are someone, that they have a voice on the Council, and that I am there to serve and help them.

Geraldine Smith Howell: I encourage young adults of the Pawnee Tribe to participate in running for Council and be supportive of it. The time is coming for new ideas and leadership. We are nearing the twenty-first century and should be prepared to accept adjustments in federal programs.

In the past, college education was not accessible to all people; for Council members of the future, will you now give some advice directly to young Native girls about the need for a college degree?

Elizabeth R. Leading Fox-Black Owl: For various reasons, college is not for everyone. Pursue any kind of post–high school training and/or education. The idea is to prepare oneself to become independent, self-sufficient, and to give something back to parents, grandparents, the community, and the tribe.

Kathaleen Salmon Daniels: A college education is very important to succeed in today's society. That an education is the key element in one's life; that more doors and opportunities are opening up for young girls; and that we are proving every day that females can be successful and lead our people in the present and the future. I am a strong believer in education, whether it be someone in elementary school, high school, or college.

Geraldine Smith Howell: Go to college. Expect it to be hard at times, but don't get discouraged. Many opportunities exist in the health care profession, for example. In moving toward the twenty-first century, look at specialized career fields.

Will you give some overall advice to young women?

Elizabeth R. Leading Fox-Black Owl: Women play a major role in our Native families. Girls must prepare themselves to be proud and to respect themselves. They must keep healthy, learn to love so they can give love. Always remember that there is no job or position that a woman cannot handle. Women have much strength and it is important to believe in oneself.

Kathaleen Salmon Daniels: Get an education and continually work to improve yourselves. Set your goals high and don't ever think you are not good enough "just because you are a girl." Be proud of who you are and what you do.

Geraldine Smith Howell: If you don't feel college is for you, then try a vo-tech school. Know that your family is behind you, yet learn to be self-supporting. Get an education, and think of yourself and what you want to accomplish in life. Hold off on marriage and children.

Pawnee schoolteacher Helen Echohawk Norris. SOURCE: *The Pawnee*, Dennis B. Fradin, Childrens Press, Chicago, IL, 1988.

Will you give some overall advice to young men?

Elizabeth R. Leading Fox-Black Owl: Set goals and strive to reach these goals, especially college or any career preparation. You have a big responsibility in the family, not only as a breadwinner but also as a role model for children. Realize that being tough and rough is not what determines who is a man. There are other more important values, such as setting a good example and being the best in all situations.

Young men and young women: Look up to family members, learn what can be learned, and be proud of what we are; seek guidance from elders and share it with non-Indians.

Kathaleen Salmon Daniels: Get an education and continually work to improve yourselves. We are all one and must work together—whether boys or girls, young or old—in order to make a better life for our tribal members and ourselves. Be proud of who you are and what you do.

Geraldine Smith Howell: Know what you want to do after high school. Keep your mind and body clear and clean. Be self-supporting, learn some skills, and get an education!

Young Native men and Native women: Don't forget your traditions and culture!

DECISION MAKING FOR THE SEVENTH GENERATION

The three Pawnee tribal leaders tried to show you that leadership means giving service to people. Many people think of government only as politics, but these interviews tell you how these women make governmental decisions to help their people with spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental needs.

The six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy of the Northeast teach that important decisions must consider not just the generation living at the moment but also those born for the next six generations. This teaching is called the Principle of the Seventh Generation.

Navajo woman with twins in New Mexico, during the late nineteenth century. SOURCE: *Women in American Indian Society.* Rayna Green, Chelsea House Publishers, New York, NY, 1992.

When important ideas are discussed, many Native people use a method called the "Talking Circle." By having all present sit or stand in a circle, each person is equal to all others and is assured of (a) being respected while speaking and (b) having a choice to speak or to pass. Your teacher or leader can choose an object that is or can be important to the group. This object is given to the first person, who passes it to the next person if she or he has nothing to say or holds the object while speaking in order to signal to all present that is it her or his time to speak. The item helps the speaker focus on what to say and signals to all others that it is their time to listen. Your teacher or leader might ask a different student to select an item important to that student for use in each Talking Circle.

This activity gives every student an opportunity to speak and encourages mutual respect. Also, each speaker shows leadership by sticking to the topic. While remembering the good words of the Pawnee women leaders, your group can use the Talking Circle method to analyze and apply what those women said.

FIRST TALKING CIRCLE

One way to start the discussion is to answer the following questions:

1. If you were to be a Tribal Council member, how might you prepare for this leadership role?

2. Is this preparation similar to preparing to be a city or county leader? How or how not?

3. What are the needs of your school's students in each of the four areas that you learned on the Medicine Wheel: spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental?

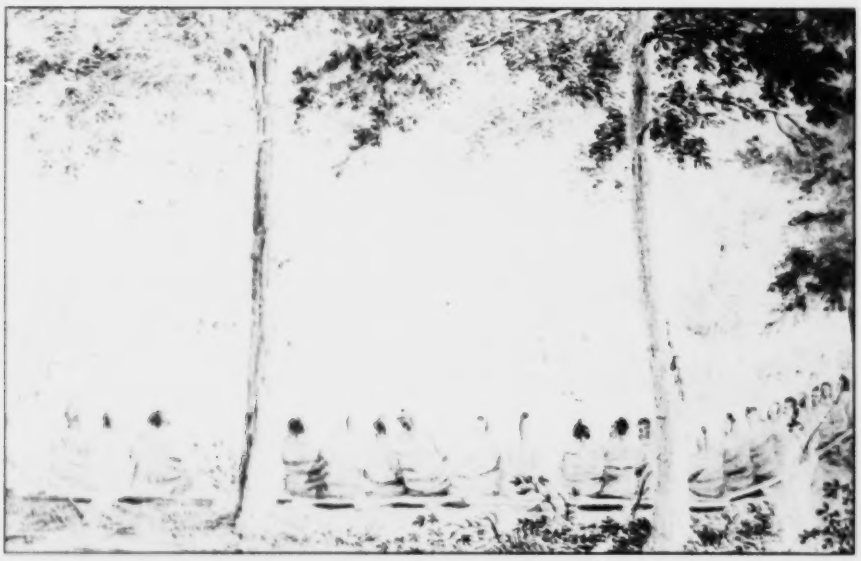
4. Although you might not be elected as a class or school leader, what service could you give to help your group spiritually, emotionally, physically, and mentally?

5. What kinds of decisions did the Pawnee women talk about that require consideration of the Seventh Generation from today?

SECOND TALKING CIRCLE

You have decisions to make every day, such as whether or not to come to school; whether or not to study while you are at school and when you get home; whether to hang out with friends who can help you make it through life making good decisions or with people who let you make decisions that will sooner or later mess you up.

Think of the power you have in decision making. During the second round of the Talking Circle, tell what decisions you made today or recently and whether they could affect students/people of the Seventh Generation. How might your decisions affect the Seventh Generation? If none of your decisions would have that effect, what decisions might you have in the future that will? How will you determine what future Seventh Generation decisions to anticipate so that you make decisions to be known by all as "excellent" or "awesome"?



Pawnee Indians meet with a U.S. government official in 1819. Drawing by Samuel Seymour. SOURCE: *The Pawnee*, Dennis B. Fradin, Childrens Press, Chicago, IL, 1988.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SELECTED STUDENT RESOURCES

BOOKS

Doesn't Fall off His Horse, Virginia A. Stroud, Dial Books for Young Readers/ Penguin Books USA, Inc., New York, NY, 1994. Cherokee female artist illustrated and put in writing a true story of foolishness and courage told to her by her Kiowa "grandfather."

Indian Country, A History of Native People of America, Karen D. Harvey and Lisa D. Harjo, North American Press/Fulcrum Publishing, Golden, CO, 1994. As a Choctaw woman, one of the authors (Harjo) lends credence to an innovative approach to telling the history of indigenous peoples. Lesson plans use the whole-language approach to learning and include the authentic voices of a variety of tribal people.

The Pawnee, Dennis B. Fradin, Childrens Press, Chicago, IL, 1988. Basic historical information about Chahiksichahiks, known in English as Pawnee. Photos of historical and contemporary figures heighten the interest.

Pawnee Hero Stories and Folktales, George Bird Grinnell, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, NE, 1961. In 1872, the author lived with the Chahiksichahiks in Indian Territory (what is now Oklahoma). In this book, he conveys stories told to him by tribal members and character stories of tribal members.

Reclaiming the Vision, section entitled "Anthology of Emerging Native Voices," Lee Francis and James Bruchac, eds., Greenfield Review Press/The Talman Co., Inc., New York, NY, 1996. This collection includes writings by current American Indian authors.

Sarah Winnemucca, Mary Frances Morrow, Raintree Publishers, Milwaukee, WI, 1990. Illustrations accompany this book about a Paiute woman who was a well-known spokesperson for American Indian rights.

Women in American Indian Society, Rayna Green, Chelsea House Publishers, New York, NY, 1992. The Cherokee historian shows the challenges of tribal life and the strength that tribal women provide to it.

Other books in the Raintree/Rivilo American Indian Stories series, Milwaukee, WI, 1990. This series features the lives of women and men who were important figures in their tribes. Some of the books were written by Native authors.

Native Women

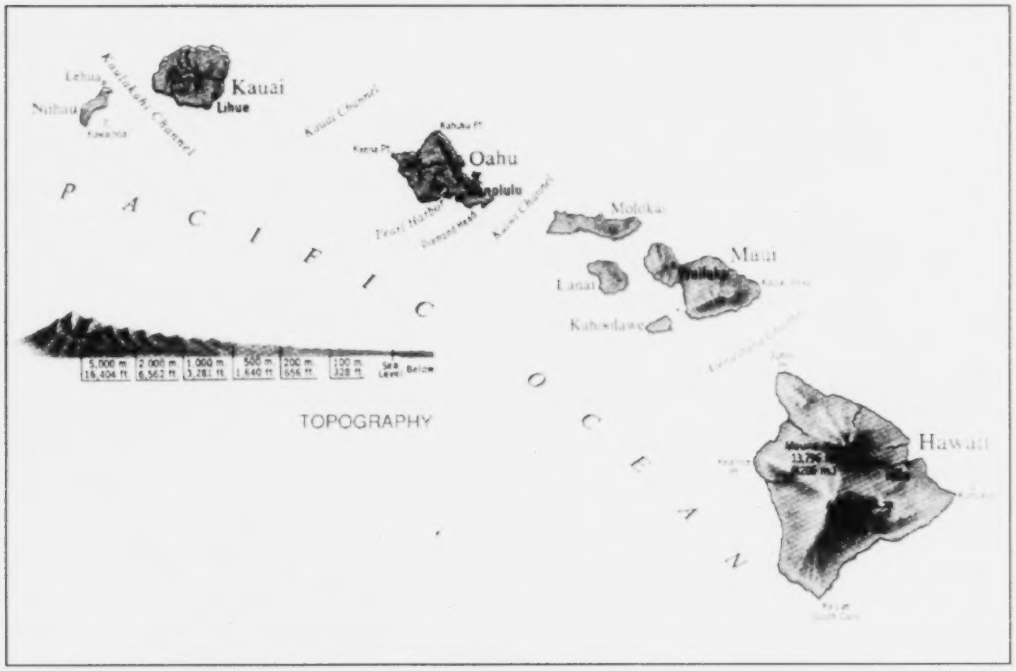
- **Native Hawaiian Women**

INTRODUCTION: NATIVE HAWAIIAN WOMEN

For women there are undoubtedly great difficulties in their paths, but so much the more to overcome.

—Maria Mitchell
Astronomer

Hawaii, the newest state in the United States, has people from many backgrounds. People come from all over the world to live in Hawaii, and they bring with them their language, culture, and values. Islanders try to live the Aloha Spirit—a way of life that promotes common courtesy to others and living in harmony with them. The word *Aloha* is a greeting of both welcome and goodbye.



Map of Hawaii. SOURCE: *Hawaii: From Sea to Shining Sea,* Dennis B. Fradin, Childrens Press, Chicago, IL, 1994.

Hawaii is the only state within the United States with a Royal Palace—Iolani Palace on Oahu. The Hawaiian Islands are rich in Hawaiian heritage, where islanders can experience and enjoy the many cultural contributions of the Native Hawaiian people and their modern interpretation of past history.

BACKGROUND

One hundred years ago, women in Hawaii were taught from early childhood that being good mothers to their children and helpmates to husbands were their true functions in life. In the Hawaiian culture, men were favored over women because it was believed that women were less pleasing to the gods.

Both sexes were forced to obey the religious laws, or *kapus*, of the land. The penalty for disobedience was death. These laws severely limited women's freedom. Women were forbidden to eat certain foods that men enjoyed, they could not eat with their men, and they were not allowed to fish in saltwater areas or go near nets laid out by the men. Married women who were menstruating were not allowed to sleep in the same house as their husbands.

Despite this harsh and unfair treatment, by the nineteenth century, Hawaiian women managed to control many aspects of their lives. By today's standards, it is no exaggeration to say that, in many ways, Hawaiian women had a freer and more liberated lifestyle than did mainland American women. True, the Hawaiian woman lived a humble existence. She lived in a grass shack; worked hard all day gathering food from the freshwater ponds; and made all the necessary clothing, household mats, bedding, and cooking tools. Yet, they were not faced with the stereotypes that boxed women in the United States mainland into artificial societal categories. Hawaiians did not confuse beauty and softness with helplessness and low intellect, nor did they see petiteness and fragility as the ideal of beauty.

Hawaiian women were free to participate in many male-oriented activities such as running barefoot into the ocean's surf, swimming, surfing, climbing, fishing, and actively playing in the sports and games of the Islands—even some-

times fighting in battle at the side of their men—all without diminishing their femininity. Also, Hawaiian women did not spend their time preparing meals; men did all the cooking.

Things began to change with the arrival of missionaries and foreigners from European lands. The Hawaiian people were faced with a new set of problems: cultural conflicts and crosscurrents pulling them in opposite directions. They were forced to convert to the missionaries' way of doing things, which was a very different lifestyle than they had known. For them, it was a real identity crisis—one that would linger forever in their lives. Eventually, they experienced the loss of control in their own land and witnessed the diminishing of numbers.

At that time, Hawaiian women of nobility had an advantage over the missionary women, for they had control over their own property and wielded political authority. This control helped them to carry on the Hawaiian tradition of caring for the children, the ill, and the elderly. On the other hand, missionary wives had no property, for they shared a communal life with everything held in common and controlled by their husbands. However, a great advantage that the missionary women brought to Hawaii and shared with the women of Hawaii was a wealth of skills in teaching and nursing. Their dedicated service to the community was also strongly demonstrated in their everyday activities. The combined forces of the Hawaiian and missionary women in building schools, churches, and hospitals brought to Hawaii many positive social changes.

Two women, born a century apart, helped further women's rights in Hawaii. They were **Kaahumanu**, who was both the Kuhina-nui (Vice-King) and Queen Regent during the reign of King Kamehameha II, and **Rosalie Enos Lyons Keliinoi**, the first woman legislator. The work of these two astute and politically sophisticated lawgivers changed the shape of our lives.

Kaahumanu was the favorite wife of Kamehameha the Great. During his reign, she was very influential in uniting the kingdom and addressing the concerns of the people. After his death in 1819, she continued to be a steadying

influence on the Hawaiian people and their rulers. Kaahumanu resented the Hawaiian religious laws against women and became a Christian. She encouraged and authorized the teaching of reading and writing by the missionaries, and was responsible for giving 224 acres to the missionaries, which later became known as Punahou School. Her efforts to improve the lives of the people were evidenced by the establishment of the first code of laws for the kingdom, which forbade murder, theft, and fighting, and ordered that all people learn to read and write. She influenced the new king to break the *kapu* against women eating publicly with men, and kept the Hawaiian Islands unified, partly through a political marriage to the King of Kauai.

In 1925, another part-Hawaiian woman, Rosalie Enos Lyons Keliinoi, won a seat in the territorial legislature. Unlike Kaahumanu, she was not born to power. Her mother was Hawaiian and her father was a Portugese farmer on Maui. She was married twice—to a Democratic politician and saloon keeper with whom she had seven sons, and later to a Republican with powerful friends. As a legislator, she helped elevate women's place in society by focusing attention

Iolani Palace on the island of Oahu. SOURCE: *Hawaii: From Sea to Shining Sea*, Dennis B. Fradin. Childrens Press, Chicago, IL, 1994.

on programs that protected women and children. Of the sixteen bills she proposed, four were enacted. One empowered all women to sell the property they brought to marriage without the consent of their husbands; another enabled women to serve on juries; the third promoted the welfare and hygiene of pregnant women and their infants; and the fourth was instrumental in helping to set up a refuge for unmarried women and orphans.

Some other notable female Hawaiian pioneers are listed below:

- **Queen Liliuokalani**, 1838–1917, was the last reigning monarch in Hawaii. She attempted to restore power to the monarchy, but it resulted in the overthrow of the monarchy in 1893 by business people and others. Her strength and tenacity in upholding the Hawaiian culture and its people's dignity are imbedded in the hearts of Native Hawaiians.

- **Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop**, 1831–1884, founded the Kamehameha Schools to assure an education for Hawaiians. She created her estate with the provision that the land was not to be sold, resulting in present control of extensive lands by the Bishop Estate.

- **Mary Kawena Pukui**, 1895–1986, worked for the preservation of the Hawaiian culture and language through research, writings, teachings, and translations.

- **Iolani Luahine**, 1915–1978, was an exponent of ancient hula, teacher and performer.

These were truly Native Hawaiian female trailblazers.

This unit reflects just two examples of the many Native Hawaiian women who are making choices every day that fulfill them, and are meeting challenges with their knowledge, skills and attitude about life. Hawaii's contemporary women are continuing to make many accomplishments in all aspects of their lives, through multiple everyday roles.

LOKELANI LINDSEY

Lokelani Lindsey is one of Hawaii's most successful women. In 1993, she was appointed the first woman trustee working in the country's largest educational trust, the Bishop Estate, for the benefit of Native Hawaiian youngsters attending the Kamehameha Schools. These are private schools whose enrollment consists of students of Hawaiian ancestry in kindergarten through twelfth grade. The Bishop Estate was set up by Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop to support the Kamehameha Schools and is worth nearly $2 billion today.

As a trustee of the Bishop Estate, Ms. Lindsey has numerous responsibilities and assignments that range from managing finances to making sure that Hawaiian culture is taught in schools and that Native Hawaiian students get the best education possible. She takes a very active role in school site visits.

In the 1960s, Ms. Lindsey started her career as an educator in the Hawaii state public school system as a teacher and administrator on Oahu and in the County of Maui schools. From 1982 to 1993, Ms. Lindsey was the district superintendent of schools for the County of Maui. She was responsible for the education of students on the islands of Maui, Molokai, and Lanai. Administrators, teachers, staff, and students were very familiar with Ms. Lindsey because of her frequent visits and guest appearances at their special events and in their classrooms.

In 1990, she ran unsuccessfully for mayor of Maui County. Although she lost her bid for that office, she gained a lot of supporters for her ideas for a better future for Maui and the state of Hawaii because of her genuine interest in improving life in Maui County. Through her leadership, Ms. Lindsey has helped many people pursue their dreams.

Today, she still invests a lot of her time in keeping up with the developments, concerns, and people on the island of Maui. People there consider her the same "down-to-earth person she was before being such a rich and famous person." She goes shopping in the same stores, eats at the same restaurants that she and her husband, Steve, enjoy, visits and spends time with family and her longtime friends. As Ms. Lindsey explained in a recent interview, "I still shop the sales and cut out the coupons. I've been doing it for over thirty years. Being thrifty is a way of life."

Although Ms. Lindsey has a house on the island of Oahu, she commutes from her island home on Maui to Oahu daily for her meetings and activities. She says it's simply easier to catch a thirty-five-minute flight back to Maui than fight the traffic on Oahu. She also travels around the world to check on Bishop Estate business. While her travels are important to her job, she says that the "best part of going away is coming home."

At home, she enjoys spending time with her husband of three decades, Steve, and their five grown children and many grandchildren. She can be seen singing and dancing the hula at luaus and riding horseback in festive Hawaiian parades. Ms. Lindsey is a person of many interests and talents. Her life gives other people the hope that by working hard and believing in yourself, you can achieve your goals and sometimes even exceed them.

Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop (1838–1884). SOURCE: *Hawaii: From Sea to Shining Sea,* Dennis B. Fradin, Childrens Press, Chicago, IL, 1994.

GENEVIEVE AKANA NAHULU

Genevieve Akana Nahulu's life is a tapestry woven out of the very fabric of the early Hawaiian way of life. From her early childhood experiences on the beach where she spent her summers to the lau hala products that she wove, to dancing, she demonstrates the love of the land and the people of Hawaii.

Ms. Nahulu is the oldest of five children. She is of part-Native Hawaiian and Chinese ancestry. Her mother's name was Rita Kahakukaalani Pangelina and her father's name was Albert Kahimoku Akana. As was the Native Hawaiian custom, they gave their firstborn to the grandparents to raise. It didn't mean that her parents were not involved in raising Genevieve. It simply meant that it was a way for her grandparents to teach her what they knew. Her days with her grandmother, Analika Akana, were full of interesting experiences like riding the streetcar from Kalihi to Waikiki, going to the zoo to ride an elephant, and attending an old Hawaiian church downtown.

Ms. Nahulu has many vivid memories about happy times with her parents as well—like the summers on the beach at Nanakuli, where her father pitched a tent, and many of the things they ate came from the ocean, like fish, crab, turtle, seaweed, and other wonderful seafoods. Days on the beach were spent with Genevieve's grandmother pole fishing for the evening's dinner, while Genevieve, her mother, and sisters gathered food from the ocean, sometimes went swimming, and had many wonderful moments discussing just about every topic in life. Mostly, though, their activities centered on the preparation of the meals,

because they were responsible for making sure that there was enough food for everyone.

Ms. Nahulu's early life was influenced by many people. Among them were her grandmother, who taught her verses from the Bible and religious hymns every morning; and her mother's sister, whom she called Aunty Lizzy, and who always reminded the young Genevieve, "When you have something, take care of it because you never know when you might have hard times. You don't own anything until you pay the last penny. Then it is yours." It seems that Aunty Lizzy acquired that philosophy at an early age from her parents, and felt the worth of such wise counsel in her life so strongly that she passed it on to those closest to her. It was good advice that Genevieve used for the rest of her life.

Ms. Nahulu and her husband, Eli, raised five children while working in full-time jobs. Genevieve worked as a teacher in the public school system. She says that her reward in teaching has come from her students, who are now parents and grandparents and who say that she was their favorite teacher. She was firm, but also fair, as a teacher. She remembers telling one student who needed to be disciplined, "I always say, from eight to two I am your mother. If you get hurt, I help to take care of you. If you have a problem, we try to solve it."

For a woman who has experienced the old Hawaii, lived through World War II and the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and traveled to many faraway places with her husband, Genevieve is happy today living in Nanakuli, enjoying her children and grandchildren and her everyday activities. She remains true to her philosophy of life, as she concludes, "I think it's good to take care of what you have."

Children at the Kamehameha festivities on the island of Kauai. SOURCE: *Hawaii: From Sea to Shining Sea*, Dennis B. Fradin, Childrens Press, Chicago, IL, 1994.

WOMEN OF HAWAII

DIRECTIONS

1. Create a bulletin board on Hawaii, featuring women's contributions. Contact the Hawaii Visitors Bureau to obtain literature about the Aloha State. The address and telephone number are: 2270 Kalakaua Avenue, Suite 801, Honolulu, HI 96815; (808) 923-1811.

2. As a class project, write to middle school students from Hawaii, specifically from the Kamehameha Schools, to learn more about which Native Hawaiian women students today look to for inspiration and guidance. Share literature on the Kamehameha Schools and the history of Hawaii and its people. The address for the Kamehameha Schools is 1887 Makuakane Street, Honolulu, HI 96817; (808) 842-8211. Perhaps getting on the Internet with the students would be very informative and interesting.

3. Read the literature on other contemporary women of Hawaii that is listed in the resource list in this manual.

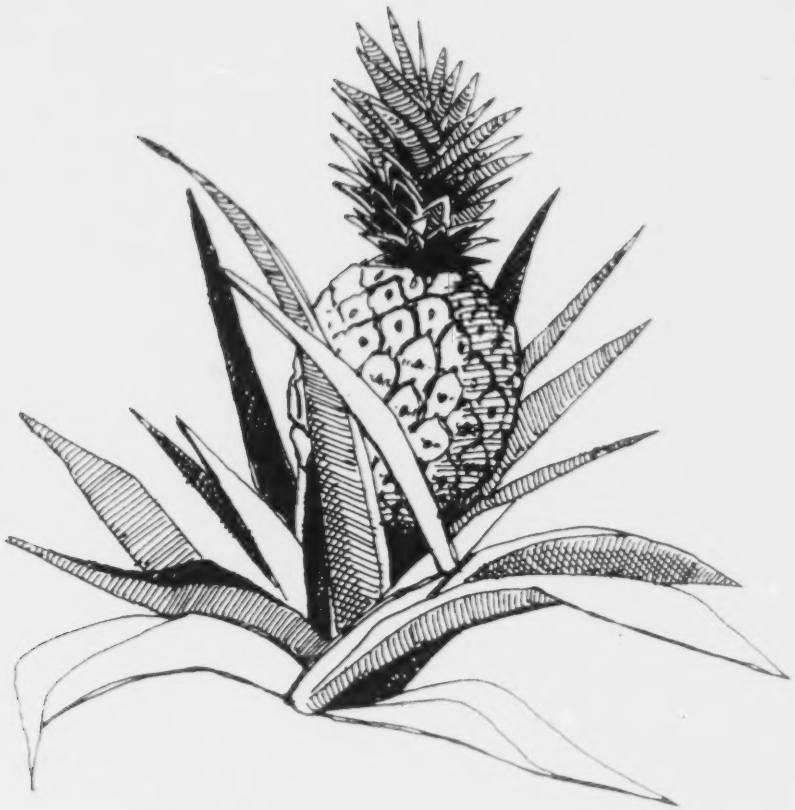
4. Do a class project for at least one day where boys and girls interview, by telephone conference call, both of the contemporary women in this unit—Lokelani Lindsey and Genevieve Nahulu—about any questions they may have and want personally answered.

Queen Lydia Liliuokalani (1838–1917). SOURCE: *Hawaii: From Sea to Shining Sea,* Dennis B. Fradin, Childrens Press, Chicago, IL, 1994.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

59 BEST COPY AVAILABLE

5. Watch the video "Notable Women of Hawaii," which can be borrowed from the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women, 235 South Beretania Street, #407, Honolulu, HI 96813; (808) 586-5757.



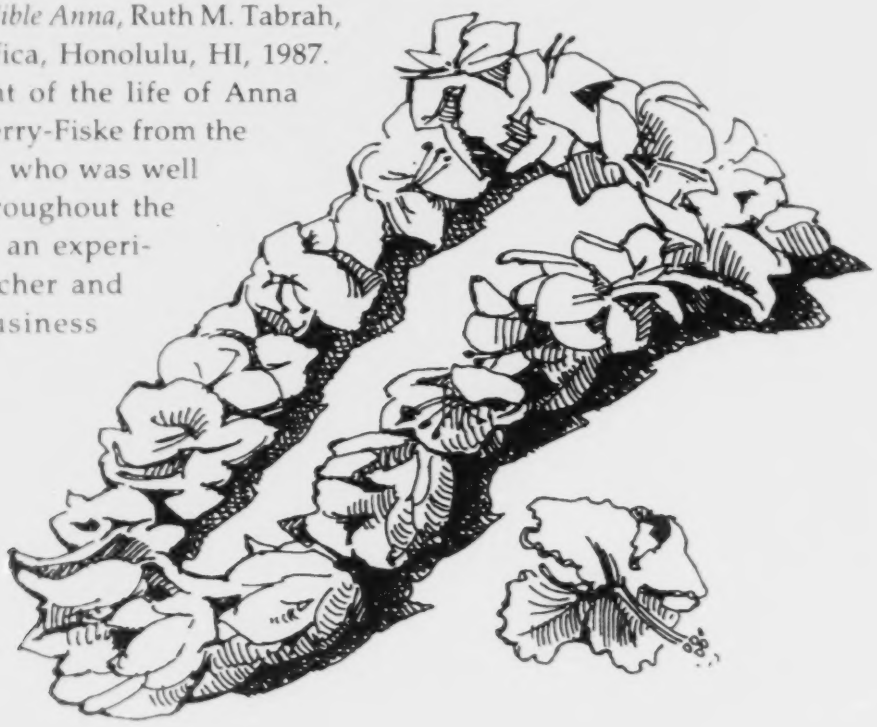
SELECTED STUDENT RESOURCES

The following resources provide information about Native Hawaiian women.

BOOKS

Genevieve Akana Nahulu of Nankuli: A Life History, as told to Yvonne Yarber, Hawaii Department of Education, Honolulu, HI, 1991. This oral history chronicles the life of Genevieve Akana Nahulu from her earliest childhood days to her adulthood and provides photographs of her family and their activities. This life history incorporates the changing times of Hawaii, and the photographs depict the historical journey to the present.

Hawaii's Incredible Anna, Ruth M. Tabrah, Press Pacifica, Honolulu, HI, 1987. An account of the life of Anna Lindsey Perry-Fiske from the Big Island, who was well known throughout the islands as an experienced rancher and astute business person.



Iolani Luahine, Pictorial Account, Francis Haar, Topgallant Publishing Company, Honolulu, HI, 1985. A pictorial account of the greatest hula dancer of the twentieth century, capturing the diverse views of this Living Treasure of Hawaii from her earliest days and highlighting her multifaceted personality—as a hula dancer, chanter, goddess, priestess, and so forth. The pictures depict Iolani Luahine's unique expressions revealed in the different types of hula.

Ka'u Ho'oilina, My Legacy, Malcolm Naea Chun, Hui Hanai, Honolulu, HI, 1993. Students will love these three short stories about Queen Liliuokalani, which show the human side of this famous queen who loved the people she served.

Margaret of Molokai, Mel White, Word Books, Honolulu, HI, 1981. Chronicles the experiences of Margaret Kaupuni, a Native Hawaiian woman, with leprosy.

Princess Pauahi Bishop & Her Legacy, Cobey Black and Kathleen Dickenson Mellen, Kamehameha Schools Press, Honolulu, HI, 1965. This biography of Princess Pauahi Bishop is a wonderful story about what the princess felt was important to her and what she wanted for the Native Hawaiian people.

UNIT 2
Women of the South

- From Civil War to Civil Rights
- Gullah Women

Women of the South

- **From Civil War to Civil Rights**

INTRODUCTION: FROM CIVIL WAR TO CIVIL RIGHTS

I've been dreaming for as far back as I had my thought of what it should be like to be a human being. My desires were to be free.

—Rosa Parks
Civil Rights Leader

Women should be tough, tender, laugh as much as possible, and live long lives. The struggle for equality continues unabated, and the woman warrior who is armed with wit and courage will be among the first to celebrate victory.

—Maya Angelou
Wouldn't Take Nothing for My Journey Now

Southern women have historically represented the whole range of social and political roles and views. There is no single profile of the southern woman, for she can be found in every class, race, culture, ability group, and political viewpoint. Women have been both slaveholders and those who most actively opposed slavery. Women have been both slaves and those who provided leadership and support to efforts toward civil rights. This section will focus on some of the women and women's organizations that provided the spirit and action to accomplish greater rights for all, from antilynching and labor organizing to persuasive writing and the formation of active, ongoing women's organizations.

In almost every town or rural area across the South, there were organizers, such as Ella Butler Scarborough and Helen Matthews Lewis, outraged by injustice, who worked to eliminate racism and sexism. The history of these women was largely invisible until the 1960s, when women's roles, particularly the roles of Black women in the Civil Rights movement, began to be recognized. Through

the use of women's letters, diaries, stories, slave narratives, and the records of women's grassroots organizations, the role of southern women moved beyond the myth of the ideal Southern woman.

The ideal Southern woman was one who supported her husband's absolute authority in the home and in the community and behaved in a "ladylike" fashion at all times. This concept of the "Southern lady" applied to white women, generally of privileged classes, and did not include Black or Native American women. Their roles and labor, particularly those of Black women, allowed much of the privilege experienced by white women to exist. In spite of these strong expectations, women continued to demonstrate their leadership in the family, community, business, and civil rights.

Growing political participation by Black people and women threatened the authority and power of Southern white males. This growing activism, particularly against segregation, also threatened the tranquility of the Southern lifestyle, the myth of the "Southern lady." African American women in the South were strangers to neither hard work nor physical danger, and their efforts in the Civil Rights movement involved both.

SOURCES: *[Left] A Daughter of the South*, ink on paper, Charles Dana Gibson (1867–1944), New York, c. 1909, Library of Congress. *[Right] Flower Sellers*, watercolor on paper, Margaret Dashiell (1869–1958), Richmond, 1925, Valentine Museum, Katherine Wetzel photograph. SOURCE: *A Share of Honour: Virginia Women 1600–1945*, The Virginia Women's Cultural History Project, Richmond, VA, 1984.

Many women may not have directed programs, but they were often the people who brought their neighbors to voter registration meetings, who distributed food and clothing to those who lost their jobs because of movement activity, and who housed and took care of the young civil rights volunteers. They also wrote about what they knew, and women such as Lorraine Hansberry knew firsthand about discrimination. Her play, *A Raisin in the Sun*, was one of the first New York stage productions ever to present a realistic portrayal of a Black family. Lucy Randolph Mason could have lived a traditional life but instead chose to work for equality and safety for working families. Although each woman and group of women had different experiences, they were all willing to risk their lives and their livelihoods to work to end injustice and discrimination.

Twelve Reasons Why Mothers Should Have The Vote

Better Babies—Better Homes—Better Schools

1. **BECAUSE** the mother's business is home-making and child-training and the child and the home are the greatest asset of the nation.
2. **BECAUSE** the welfare of the child is affected by the laws of the State as well as the rules of the home.
3. **BECAUSE** there are just as many home interests in the government as there are business interests and the mother is primarily the custodian of these home interests.
4. **BECAUSE** the lowest death rate of babies in the world is in New Zealand, the country where mothers have had the vote the longest. In that country, the government sends out nurses to every town, village and country district, to instruct and aid mothers in the care of their babies. Young girls are taught baby hygiene and feeding.
5. **BECAUSE** the banner baby state, California, an equal suffrage state, has the highest birth rate and a very low death rate. (The lowest death rate of babies in the United States is in the city of Seattle, Washington State, where women vote.
6. **BECAUSE** children have better school facilities where mothers vote. Washington, an equal suffrage state, is the banner state in education. State-wide compulsory education and child labor laws put every child under fourteen years of age in school, where women vote.
7. **BECAUSE** girls have equal educational opportunities with boys from Kindergarten to State University, where women vote.
8. **BECAUSE** the moral conditions of our country are regulated by law. Should not mothers have a say about the dangers and temptations which surround their boys and girls?
9. **BECAUSE** girls of tender age are better protected by law where mothers vote. The age of consent is highest in the suffrage states.
10. **BECAUSE** mothers are equal guardians with fathers of their children in the states which have had suffrage the longest.
11. **BECAUSE** widowed mothers are protected by mother's pensions in the states where women vote.
12. **BECAUSE** it is just, it is excellent, and has proven a most successful social policy for mothers to have a voice in the laws which control themselves and their children.

SOURCE: *A publication of the Virginia Equal Suffrage League*, Broadside, Richmond, VA, 1916; Virginia Historical Society, Katherine Wetzel photograph. *A Share of Honour: Virginia Women 1600–1945*, The Virginia Women's Cultural History Project, Richmond, VA, 1984.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

In this unit, you will learn about the experiences of activist women from the post–Civil War period through the Civil Rights movement. Across the South, local women acted, sometimes alone, often in concert with other women.

SOURCES: *[Top left] Moving the Mountain: Women Working for Social Change*, Ellen Cantarow, The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, NY, 1980. *[Bottom right] Members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) stage a sit-in at the Woolworth lunch counter in Jackson, Mississippi, on May 28, 1963. Southern Exposure*, Vol. XXI, No. 1-2, Durham, NC, 1993.

VOCABULARY

Become familiar with the vocabulary listed below before beginning this unit.

Activism — Taking positive, direct action to achieve a political or social end.

Advocate — A person who speaks or writes in support of something; to be in favor of something.

Bondage — Slavery or subjection.

Civil Rights — The rights guaranteed to all Americans by the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Nineteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution and other acts of Congress, particularly the right to vote, exemption from involuntary servitude (slavery), and equal treatment of all people with respect to the enjoyment of life, liberty, and property, and to the protection of law.

Civil Rights Movement — A political movement of the 1960s wherein Americans fought to have the civil rights (see above) of all citizens enforced equally.

Compensation — Something given as an equivalent or to make amends for a loss.

Discrimination — Distinguishing differences or showing partiality or prejudice in treatment, particularly against the welfare of minority groups.

Grassroots — The "common people" who are thought to best represent the basic, direct political interests of American voters; the fundamental source or support of a political movement.

Injustice — An unfair act or situation that causes harm to a person.

Lobbying — Trying to influence a public official in favor of a particular political goal.

Lynching — Murdering a person by mob action and without lawful trial, such as by hanging.

Privilege (by Class or Race)— A right or advantage held by an individual, group or class, and withheld from certain others or all others.

Segregation — The policy or practice of compelling racial groups to live apart from each other, go to separate schools, use separate facilities, and so forth.

Suffrage — The right to vote.

Supremacy — Having the highest rank, power, or authority; being dominant.

Sweatshop — A place of business where employees work long hours at low wages under poor working conditions.

Tradition — A long-established custom or practice that has the effect of an unwritten law.

Tranquility — Calmness, serenity.

LORRAINE HANSBERRY (1930–1965)

Lorraine Hansberry could not decide whether to become an artist or a writer. While attending the University of Wisconsin, Lorraine went to a play rehearsal of Sean O'Casey's *Juno and the Paycock*. She immediately knew that she wanted to write. She wanted to write with passion and she wanted to write about African American people.

When Ms. Hansberry decided in 1950 that she no longer would attend college, she went to work as a reporter for Paul Robeson's Black newspaper, *Freedom*. During these years she wrote political articles as well as book and drama reviews. Ms. Hansberry worked hard to learn to write. After many years of work she completed a play called *A Raisin in the Sun*.

The play's title is taken from Langston Hughes' poem "Montage of a Dream Deferred." The poet notes that a dream deferred will "dry up / like a raisin in the sun—" or it will explode. The title points out the hopeless social conditions that force the African American family in her play to postpone their dreams until their own strength and pride help them struggle toward opportunity. *A Raisin in the Sun* opened on Broadway in 1959, starring Sidney Poitier, Ruby Dee, and Diana Sands. It told the story of an African American family on the south side of Chicago who bought a house in a white neighborhood.

The characters Ms. Hansberry created were true to life, so that audiences of all races could understand their problems and be happy with their successes. *Raisin* was a great hit and won for Ms. Hansberry the New York Drama Critics award. She was the first African American woman and the youngest person ever to win this award.

Ms. Hansberry became famous. And because the play dealt with the oppression of African Americans, she also became a spokesperson for and symbol of African Americans. People paid attention to her when she spoke about civil rights issues. Her success also inspired other African American theater artists across the nation and gave them opportunities that they did not have previously. Ms. Hansberry was proud that her success inspired other African American writers. She felt there was much more she wanted to write and began work on two new plays, hoping to write other things as well.

It was not to be. Ms. Hansberry developed cancer and knew she was dying. She had to be carried from her hospital bed to see her second play, *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window*, when it was produced on Broadway in 1965. She had nearly finished a play about Africa when she went blind and lost her speech six months before her death.

Ms. Hansberry was a fighter. She battled her stroke and left her sickbed to raise money for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), to meet with Robert Kennedy, to attend rehearsals for her play, and to deliver a speech on what it meant "to be young, gifted and Black," to winners of a United Negro College Fund writing contest. She continued to work for causes that concerned her throughout 1964. Recovering briefly, she remembered what she had once written: ". . . I trust that someone will complete my thoughts—this last should be the least difficult since there are so many who think as I do."

She was right. Many people think as she did, and many of them have learned to respect Lorraine Hansberry as one African American woman who stood up for equal rights through her writing and her political activism.

DREAM MAKERS: INTERPRETATION OF A DREAM

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore—
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over—
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?

—Langston Hughes
"Montage of a Dream Deferred"

DIRECTIONS

1. Read the poem by Langston Hughes that appears above. This poem was an inspiration to Lorraine Hansberry, who wrote the award-winning play, *A Raisin in the Sun*. Perhaps she had a dream to fulfill and was successful when she became a writer.

2. Using the women in this book, talk about what some of their dreams were and how their dreams were realized, using this poem as a basis for discussion.

SOURCE: *The Panther and the Lash*, Langston Hughes, Vintage Books, New York, NY, 1992 (original version, 1932).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR WOMEN WRITERS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

DIRECTIONS

Use this sample questionnaire to interview women writers in your community.

QUESTIONS

1. *Involvement in Writing*

   Briefly describe your involvement in your area of writing. Is writing your career or a special interest? What kinds of materials do you write?

2. *Interest and Training*

   How and when did you first become interested in your field? Did certain people or events encourage or inspire you? Describe any training you received or are now receiving. If writing is your career, what preparation did you need?

3. *Creative Process*

   How do you prepare yourself for beginning or doing your writing? Where do you get ideas or your motivation?

4. *Challenges and Rewards*

What are the most rewarding or interesting aspects of your work as a writer? What are the problems or special challenges you face? What benefits do you see for students in writing? If you could accomplish anything you wanted to in your field, what would that be?

5. *Women and Careers in Writing*

Did you (or do you now) experience barriers or special opportunities in your field because you are a woman? What advice would you give to a young woman considering a career in writing?

6. *Additional Comments*

Add anything that you would like to say that was not included in the questionnaire.

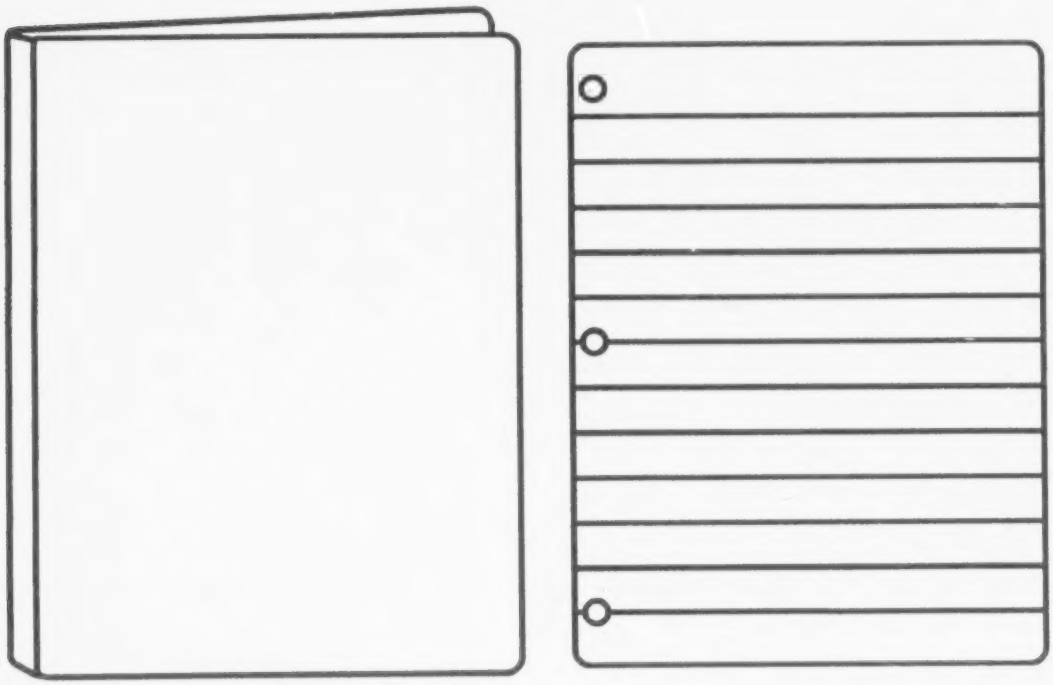
MAKE A BOOK

DIRECTIONS

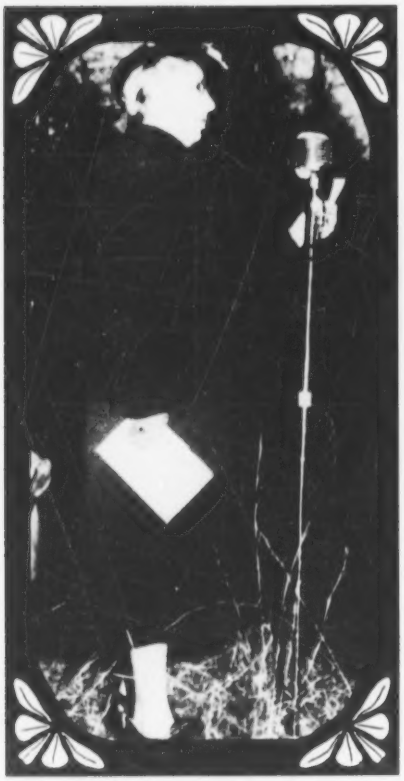
1. Pick a subject you would like to write a book about. Select a title for your book.

2. In the spaces below, design a book jacket for your book. Draw an illustration for the cover and your title in one space, and in the other space write two or three sentences to describe your book.

3. If you wish to, actually write your book!



LUCY RANDOLPH MASON (1882–1959)



Lucy Randolph Mason was born on July 26, 1882, near Alexandria, Virginia, at the home of her great-aunt Virginia Mason and her sister Ida. Lucy's father was a minister, and both her parents had a strong sense of social responsibility. It was part of their religious conviction. When Lucy was eight years old the family moved to Richmond, Virginia, because her parents believed that their children would receive a good education. Lucy learned early from her parents' example the importance of a good education, caring for others, and giving back to the community.

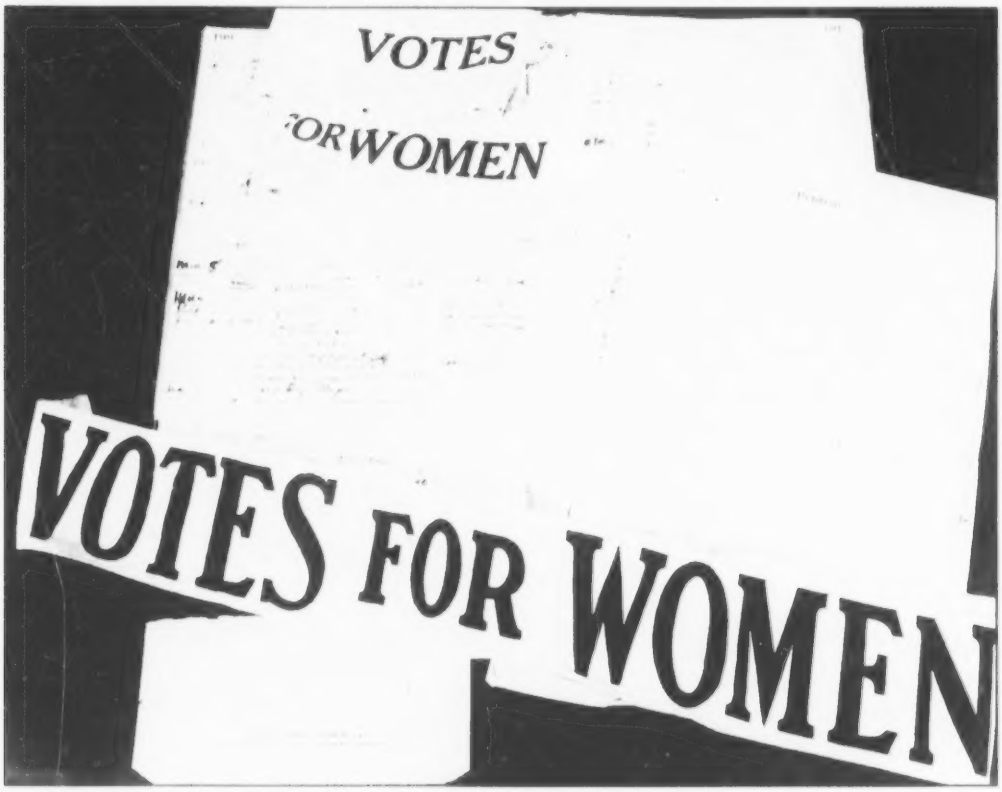
The Randolph Mason family inherited a legacy of social activism from their ancestors. George Mason was Lucy's great-great-great-grandfather. He wrote the Virginia Declaration of Rights, which became the Bill of Rights in the Constitution of the United States, and he drew up the first Constitution of Virginia, which became a model for many of the other states. Chief Justice John Marshall was her mother's great-great-uncle. On the Confederate side, her great-grandfather, James Murray Mason, was the Confederacy's envoy to Britain.

Lucy began her community work with the Equal Suffrage League and the League of Women Voters, both of which were interested in labor and social legislation. This interest began her lifelong work for equality and safety for

Lucy Randolph Mason. SOURCE: *A Share of Honour: Virginia Women 1600–1945,* The Virginia Women's Cultural History Project, Richmond, VA, 1984.

working families. Lucy worked for legislation requiring safety appliances on dangerous machinery, worker's compensation for people injured on the job, shorter hours for women workers, and protection of children from too early or dangerous employment.

Following women's suffrage in 1920, it looked like a new era in politics and women's activism. Women's organizations responded accordingly. The first task was to encourage women to register to vote. The registration drive was led by the League of Women Voters. In addition to voting, women activists in the 1920s followed through on the promises the suffragists had made—promises to expand the number of people voting, to work for peace, to clean up government, and to protect the working family.



Suffrage materials from the Equal Suffrage League. SOURCE: *A Share of Honour: Virginia Women 1600–1945*, The Virginia Women's Cultural History Project, Richmond, VA, 1984.

A number of women continued the work into the late 1920s and 1930s. In 1932, Lucy Randolph Mason became head of the National Consumers' League, one of the country's most important advocacy groups for working women. Mason, who liked to let it be known that she was descended from the Randolphs and the Masons, later became a troubleshooter for the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), helping to form labor unions in the South, "wherever or whenever and in whatever way."

Consumers' Leagues were formed in most major cities. The league was founded by religious people of Christian and Jewish faiths, and by social workers and other social activists. Its purpose was to expose and fight sweatshop conditions in industry through "investigation, education, and legislation."

The women contacted store owners, publicized abuses (e.g., many stores required salesgirls to stand continually for a ten- to twelve-hour day), and encouraged shoppers to shop at stores on their "white list." Originally formed under the leadership of Florence Kelley, the National Consumers' League sponsored a "white label" campaign in which manufacturers who met their standards could use NCL labels on their clothes. The organization also lobbied for maximum hour and minimum wage laws.

Women activists, then, went against the grain. They refused to accept all the values of the powerful; they persisted in asking government to value children, motherhood, health, and education. This was doubly true of African American women, who took up the added and more dangerous challenge of resisting white supremacy in an age of virulent racism and increasing segregation. They were altogether a remarkable generation. As Eleanor Roosevelt said,

> *I am proud to have known Miss Mason. I have admired her work and her courage. I hope there are other members in her family to follow in her footsteps to see that American democracy, which is based on equality of opportunity and justice for all, is the best that can be achieved.*

BIOGRAPHY ACTIVITY FORM

Name _____

Name of Book _____ Date of Publication _____

Publisher _____ Number of Pages _____

DIRECTIONS

Read a biography of a notable Southern woman and answer the following groups of questions as directed. Give *supporting details* from the book.

GROUP A—ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS

1. Where and when was this woman born?
2. What are some important facts about the woman's family and early life?
3. In what field of work was this woman involved?
4. What are this woman's most important contributions?

GROUP B—CHOOSE ANY THREE QUESTIONS BELOW

1. What impressed you most about this woman as you read the book?
2. If you could meet this woman, what questions might you ask?
3. What did you like or dislike about this woman? Why?
4. What problems did this woman have to overcome? Did anyone help this woman? If you had this same problem, would you handle it in the same way?

5. What adjectives do you think describe this woman? (loyal, thrifty, considerate, courageous, kind, ambitious, strong, weak, adventurous, generous, selfish, etc.) Give information from the book to support your ideas.

6. If you could have been with this woman at one time during her life, when would that time have been? Why?

GROUP C—CHOOSE AT LEAST ONE ACTIVITY BELOW

1. Explain how this woman's characteristics contributed to her success or lack of success.

2. Write a script that a tour guide might use while leading a tour through the town and/or house where this woman lived during childhood.

3. Write an interview with this woman and include information about her life (the time in which she lived, the places, family life, and contributions).

4. Write about the kinds of hardships this woman went through in childhood and adulthood.

5. Discuss how certain problems this woman faced would or would not be a problem if she were alive today.

6. Write a play that shows how this woman contributed to the life of her time.

7. Write a poem about this woman, a description of her life, or a song lyric about her. Illustrate this if you wish.

HELEN MATTHEWS LEWIS

When you get between a rock and a hard place,
there's no place else to go but up.

—Helen Lewis, 1996

Helen Lewis is concerned that people see southerners as apathetic, sitting and rocking on their porches. The truth is that she doesn't know any area with more active communities, especially when it comes to the women, than southern areas such as Appalachia. She has been a pioneer of Appalachian studies, speaking up against viewing the region as a "poverty pocket," instead seeing it as a "colony" with rich resources. Ms. Lewis was one of the first to move from a view of the region as deficient to an analysis of Appalachia as having a variety of cultures, including the traditional rural culture, a town culture, and a coal culture.

A child of the rural South, Helen Matthews Lewis was born in Jackson County, Georgia, in 1924. When she was a child, she had experiences with race relations that made her "start thinking" for herself. She recalls:

My father was a farmer and a rural mail carrier. He took me out to this Black community in the country which was on his mail route. He said he wanted me to meet the most educated man in the county, and it was a Black schoolteacher and preacher who did calligraphy. My father got him to write my name on a card because he was intrigued with his handwriting, you know, seeing it as a mail carrier. It was just a very impressive thing that here was the most educated man in the county, and my father took me to meet him. I saved that little card for years. Later that same man came to our house to see my father—I must have been seven or eight years old—and he, as Black folks did, came to the back door. My mother was in the

front room with some women, quilting or something, and I ran in to her and I said, "Mr. Rakestraw is at the door," and the women laughed because you weren't supposed to call a Black man "Mister." And I was so shamed by that. (*Appall*, Spring 1988)

From that early age, Helen became a worker for fairness for all people. She went to the Georgia State College for Women and then Duke University in North Carolina. During that time, through the YWCA, she got involved in early union, race relations, political, and civil rights work. During college, in 1944, she visited Black colleges with Black students. She worked in an interracial project in Hartford, Connecticut, and lived in coop housing with Black and Japanese students. It was very rare at that time for people from different groups to live in the same house. When VJ Day (Victory over Japan) signaled the end of World War II, they all celebrated the end of the war together.

Helen's activism increased. During the first year of her marriage, she worked at the Georgia governor's office, writing speeches for the governor. She then took a job with the YWCA, organizing meetings that included people of different races, something still very rare at that time.

The YWCA women were very strong advocates and the staff were interracial as early as the 1940s. In 1948, Helen organized an interracial meeting for the YWCA in Atlanta, Georgia. The nineteen white and three Black people at the gathering were doing the Virginia Reel square dance together when the police came in and arrested them for the crime of having a "mixed" meeting and dance. This mixed dance caused quite an uproar in the city. It made the front page of the *Atlanta Constitution* newspaper and caused some of the women to be fired from their jobs, thrown out of their apartments, or disowned by their parents. Helen's father, however, told her he was proud of her.

Helen earned her master's degree in sociology from the University of Virginia in Charlottesville and her doctorate in sociology from the University of Kentucky in Lexington. After college, while on the faculty of Clinch Valley College in Virginia, Helen worked in community organizing and development, getting people to work together to identify community needs and to develop solutions together. There, she also began her lifelong involvement with coal-

mining communities and coalfield research. Her doctoral dissertation, based on in-depth interviews with numerous coalfield families, was on "Occupational Roles and Family Roles: A Study of Coal Mining Families in the Southern Appalachians." Helen's advocacy work in coal-mining communities ranged from helping to work for the health care, benefits, working conditions, and rights of coal miners and the rights of women to work in the mines to sociological research that assisted the U.S. Bureau of Mines and other agencies to more accurately understand the region, its people, its strengths, and its needs. She once again was a pioneer, this time in the cross-cultural study of coal-mining communities. This work took her to other countries, including Wales. There, she produced videotaped interviews of coal miners and organized a cultural exchange between Appalachian and Welsh coal miners.

Tent colonies housed striking coal workers who were locked out of their company-owned homes in the 1920s. SOURCE: *The World Book Encyclopedia*, World Book, Inc., Chicago, IL, 1989.

Helen Lewis is among those who have documented the history and realities of Appalachian people, through organizations like the Highlander Research and Education Center and Appalshop Educational Services. To get a truthful picture, she said:

> *I decided that the best way to get answers from mountain people was to let them tell a story. So we'd make up little stories and ask them what they thought about it—if they agreed, or what they would do in a case like that, or what they thought this person would have done. It made it more objective so they wouldn't have to say what they'd do. And you'd get these wonderful stories.*

Ms. Lewis respected her students and engaged them in activist work with the communities they studied. Many of her students began doing oral histories, and some of her students helped start the Black Lung Association to help protect the health of coal miners. She believes strongly that rural communities can develop their own solutions and that community development must begin with the people. Helen Lewis promotes the concept that the effective development of communities must include everyone, recognize the unique local history and resources, and provide a basic education in economics to the residents. By assisting people to envision the kind of community they want to have, what they want to preserve, and what they want to start, Helen and her students and colleagues have assisted innumerable communities to mobilize and improve their economic condition as well as preserve and transmit their rich heritage. She believes that only by involving people in rethinking the existing system and building a meaningful social infrastructure can plans for economic development be created that will work over time. This approach contrasts with much of traditional economic development, which first developed business or economic plans and then presented them to the people. She starts from scratch and has people ask two questions: "What's happened to us?" and "What do we want to happen?"

Throughout her life, Helen has worked for social change. She currently directs the Horton Chair of Education for Social Change at the Highlander Center in Tennessee and recently completed a two-year appointment as director of the Appalachian Center at Berea College in Kentucky. The involvement of people of faith is important to her, and she also teaches Appalachian studies and

community development to seminarians from more than forty Protestant and Catholic churches through Berea College's Appalachian Ministries Education Resource Center.

In her lifetime, Ms. Lewis has seen changes in the role of women. She has seen that southern women, particularly southern mountain women, are incredibly strong and aggressive. Once they become activists, they are really strong leaders. But in recent years, she feels some girls and women have gone backwards, modeling themselves after Barbie® dolls for beauty instead of the beauty of their strength. The formative tomboy period that many girls once went through seems to be missing now. She hopes that the new generation is trying to get out of the narrow, depressing "Barbie doll syndrome." What she sees that is exciting to her is women getting over just being "cute" and emerging strong in their middle age. Many go back to school and re-emerge as strong, qualified women, providing important role models for girls and younger women.

She thinks that some of the gender roles have been difficult for men. Men were more destroyed by the depression, for example, because they identified with their job. Once that job was lost, men were depressed and found it difficult to move forward. The important work of developing their communities, therefore, was most often led by women, who had been trained to be more flexible and to "pick up the pieces." Because of that role, Helen Lewis and others held a workshop at the Highlander Center in 1984 called "Picking Up the Pieces." There, thirty women—Black, white, and Native American, ranging in age from eighteen to sixty—came from ten communities throughout the South to discuss their problems and share what they were doing about them. The women examined how "women's work" has changed—and remained the same—over recent generations and shared the experiences of their communities in increasing economic opportunities for women. They each told their stories and those of their mothers and grandmothers. Helen, once again, was instrumental in bringing diverse people together. Because of her extraordinary life experience, Helen Matthews Lewis has some important messages for today's young people:

- Instead of going to school and just "getting a job," think about how to create your own job, life, and economic situation.

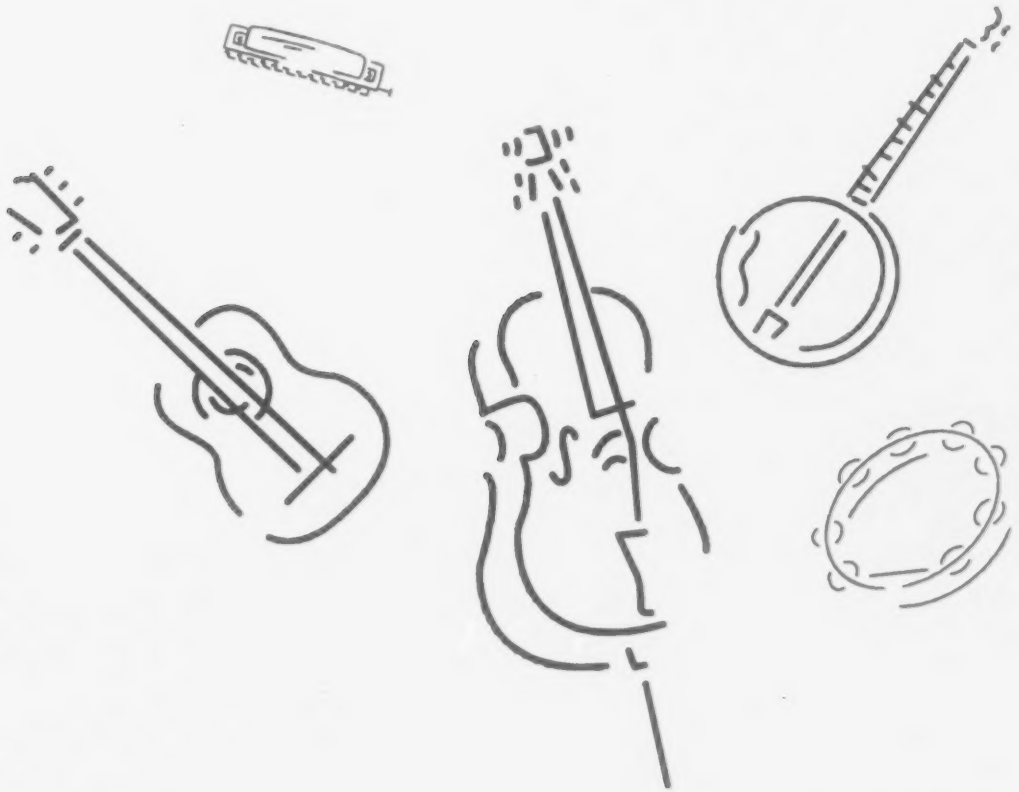
- Be creative and imaginative about how you want to live your own life.
- Be willing to take risks—for yourself and your community.
- Keep yourself independent enough so you don't have to sell yourself or your health. Don't get tied to credit cards or patterns that destroy your health or life.

Inspired by women like Eleanor Roosevelt and Amelia Earhart, Helen was also motivated and mentored by women who are not famous, like the activist directors of the YWCA. She also found role models among the suffragists like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, writing her master's thesis on "The Woman Movement and the Negro Movement: Parallel Struggles for Rights" (University of Virginia, 1949). She has translated the inspiration provided by role models like these, and the breadth and depth of her life experiences, into making a difference for her students and for rural communities throughout the South. She would, most of all, like to be remembered as a teacher—as a teacher who has been able to influence students to become activists, to improve the quality of life around them, and to be aware and proud of their own histories and those of their communities. She is proud to have influenced great students who have done incredible things!

SOUTHERN WOMEN: MUSIC MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Music has long been a way that people express feelings, find comfort, and inspire others. It has been used to communicate and lift the spirits of slaves and to bring people into action together.

In the Appalachian South, the Highlander Center in Tennessee has preserved the old ballads and folk songs, string music, and religious songs associated with mountain communities. A specific body of music also came into being when coal miners and their families attempted to improve working conditions and organize into labor unions to protect workers' rights.



In the 1920s and 1930s, songs were written about the struggle of organizing the Southern coalfields by women who were going through the struggle with their husbands and children. Songs like midwife Molly Jackson's "I Am a Union Woman" and Sara Ogan Gunning's "I Am a Girl of Constant Sorrow" became famous and inspired miners in Harlan County, Kentucky, and across the country.

One night when Florence Reece was home alone with her seven children, the sheriff came to her house to search for her husband, a miner who was a union leader. She and her family were starving. She wrote:

> *It seems like a bad dream when you think about it, that it happened to your own children. They didn't have no clothes, nor enough to eat, they was always sick and you could see they was hungry. . . . I've seen little children, their little legs would be so tiny and their stomachs would be so big from eating green apples, anything they could get. And I've seen grown men staggering, they was so hungry. One of the company bosses said he hoped the children have to gnaw the bark off the trees.*

The sheriff and his men didn't find her husband that night but Florence Reece wanted to express her feelings. Since she didn't have any paper, she tore a sheet from a calendar on her wall and wrote the song "Which Side Are You On?"

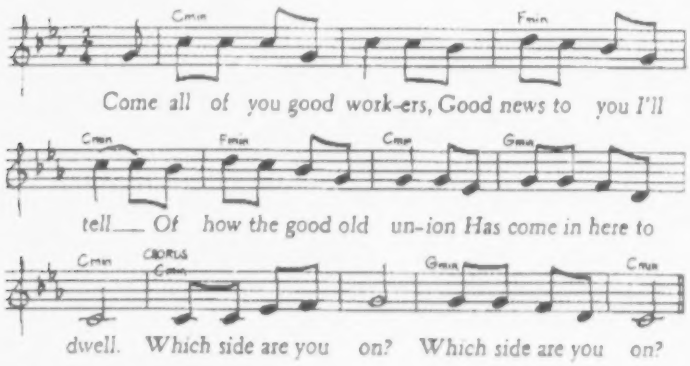
Florence said that some people say, "I don't take sides—I'm neutral." But she says there's no such thing as neutral and she urges each of us to take a position on what we believe. She also says that sometimes, when you're tired and can't take any action, then "maybe you can sing a song or write a song to help."

DIRECTIONS

Read or sing Florence Reece's song "Which Side Are You On?" Then write a song—or just some lyrics or verses for a song—about an issue you care about and would like other people to get involved with.

WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON?

WORDS: FLORENCE REECE
MUSIC: "LAY THE LILY LOW"

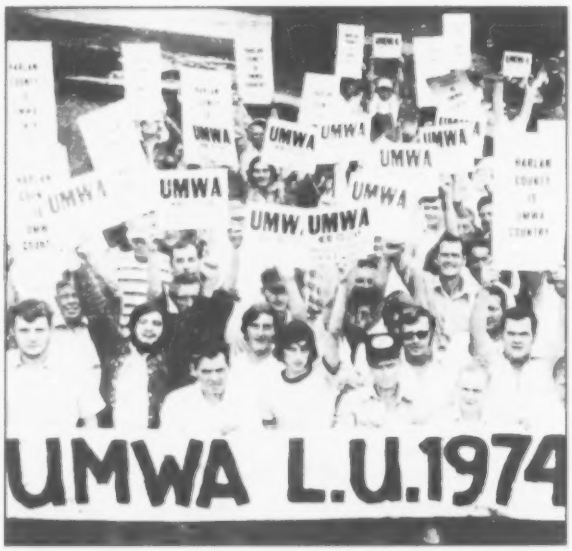


© 1947 by Stormking Music, Inc

My daddy was a miner
And I'm a miner's son,
And I'll stick with the union
Till ev'ry battle's won.
Which side are you on? etc.

They say they have to guard us
To educate their child,
Their children live in luxury,
Our children almost wild.
Which side are you on? etc.

They say in Harlan County
There are no neutrals there;
You'll either be a union man
Or a thug for J. H. Blair.
Which side are you on? etc.



United Mine Workers of America picket Harlan County, Kentucky, coal mines. SOURCE: *Southern Exposure*, Vol. XXI, No. 1-2, Spring/Summer 1993, Durham, NC.

ELLA BUTLER SCARBOROUGH

Born in Sumter, South Carolina, to a Baptist minister father and a mother who was a secretary for the Clemson University Extension Service, Ella Butler Scarborough learned early about the importance of family, faith, and activism. One of five children, Ella attended public schools and graduated from Lincoln High School in Sumter. Her father, a dynamic minister, and her older sister, who became an attorney and the first Black woman to be a pastor of a Baptist church, were inspirational role models for her. She had a long line of activism in her family. Ella is the great-grandniece of educator/activist Mary McLeod Bethune, who was the sister of her great-grandfather on her mother's side, Henry McLeod. Mary McLeod Bethune came to Ella's family home every Saturday afternoon. Ella remembers one Saturday in 1955 when the mayor came to pick them up so that Mary McLeod Bethune could cut the ribbon opening the new Birney Center, with her proud family in attendance.

Ella Butler Scarborough's formal advocacy for civil rights began in eighth grade. When Black citizens were not allowed to go in the front door of the Sumter Theater for the movies, Ella was one of 300 people—junior high, high school, and college students, as well as adults—who protested for the right to go in the front door of the movie theater. She was not about to be denied that right simply because of the color of her skin. The protesters were all arrested, including Ella and her two sisters and one of her brothers. They had to remain in jail for two weeks because the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) and CORE (Congress of Racial Equality) did not have enough money to bail them out of jail.

Ella remembers those two weeks in jail as a wonderful experience because people of all ages bonded together in their common belief for justice for all Americans. She also remembers the good feeling when Mr. Barton, her eighth-grade teacher, told the class about the girl who "stood up for her rights" and how proud he was of her. At that time, Ella felt she was "just as good as anyone else in my community and, if they could walk in the front door, I was going to too." From that experience, she committed herself to better her race and also to run for office so that she could be in a better position to help.

Not everyone agreed that Ella was suited to be a leader. Her seventh-grade English teacher thought that Ella was "stupid," not smart enough to be class president. So, although the students elected Ella as class president, the teacher took the presidency away from her and gave it to a male student. Since her school was segregated, and she was in class with other Black students only, this was not an issue of her race but of her gender. Rather than becoming discouraged by her teacher's low expectations for her, Ella believed in herself, relying on what she had been taught by her family. She ran for office again and was elected president of the Library Club in tenth grade and was elected to serve on the Student Council in eleventh and twelfth grades.

Ella aspired to a career in library science, encouraged by her school librarian, who believed in her and urged her to enter that field rather than teaching, because there were more opportunities. She entered South Carolina State University and quickly entered a dual track—working in library science and in civil rights. In 1968, when Blacks were denied entrance to the local bowling alley, she and her friends participated in many student meetings. As a result, a protest was organized, with some of the leadership coming from South Carolina State football players. When they tried to go through the front door of the bowling alley for the simple right to bowl, they were turned away. When they protested, they were violently pushed back and hosed down with pressured water hoses. Finally, the local authorities fired into the crowd, killing three students and injuring thirty-four others. This horrible incident became known as the "Orangeburg Massacre." Feelings against allowing Black people to enter the bowling alley and to bowl were so strong that, after the massacre, the community purposely burned down the bowling alley rather than allow Black people to go inside.

After college, she moved to North Carolina and worked for three years as a junior high school librarian in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Schools. Following that experience, she went to the Duke Power Company to develop its technical library.

Her first bite into politics was as a community-based activist. In 1977 her neighborhood in Charlotte, North Carolina, known as the Clanton Park Community, had no sidewalks or traffic lights. Ella and a friend, Ron Leeper, went door to door circulating petitions to get sidewalks and traffic lights to make their neighborhood safer. After this successful campaign, Ron Leeper was elected to the Charlotte city council, becoming the first Black elected official. When he developed a committee for District 3, Ella Butler Scarborough became the chair of the committee. In 1987, when Ron Leeper left the District 3 city council seat and ran for an at-large position, Ella was ready to run for the District 3 seat.

The Southern Rural Women Network joins in a protest march in Alabama. SOURCE: *The Day the Women Got the Vote*, George Sullivan, Scholastic, Inc., New York, NY, 1994.

Her campaign was successful and Ella Butler Scarborough made history, becoming the first Black woman ever to serve on the city council in Charlotte. It was important to her to be "at the table," to be in a role that could make a difference. She says:

> *It's good to be at the table when the discussions are being made—because people who don't look like me don't think like me. When I'm at the table, I raise those issues and also raise their consciousness level.*

When Ella Scarborough was first elected to the Charlotte city council, six of the council's members, including the mayor, were women. By 1996, there were only three women. Ella is concerned that we are losing ground—not only racial ground but gender ground as well. She continually educates people to understand the importance of their voting. She notes that women are leaders in our homes and in our churches. Women are the highest voting power in the nation. We elect men and allow them to lead us, instead of sharing that power.

She believes that southern women have their own flair, particularly in reference to being aggressive and to the point. African American women through-

Members of the National Organization for Women preparing for a women's march. SOURCE: *The Day the Women Got the Vote,* George Sullivan, Scholastic, Inc., New York, 1994.

out the country have this same trait and are willing to be brash in order to stand for what they believe in. They have the same inner drive across the country: believing that their children must be somebody, that they must protect their family, and that they must support their husbands.

Ella Butler Scarborough's life took a dramatic turn in 1991, when her husband died suddenly of a massive heart attack. Until then, they had what might be considered a "role reversal" in their marriage. Her husband had the main role within the household, cooking, cleaning, paying the bills, and so forth. Ella worked actively outside the home, but did less within their household. When her husband passed away, she had to learn how to do both roles—her children even taught her how to use a vacuum cleaner and how to turn on the lawn mower.

Ella wasn't automatically a winner—it took lots of hard work and faith. She was born at three minutes after twelve on a Sunday night, weighing only three pounds, and stayed in an incubator for three months. She was slow to develop and didn't walk until she was three years old. When she learned to walk, she was considered a "slow learner." Her seventh grade English teacher, the one who took the class presidency away from her, failed her in English, causing Ella to repeat the seventh-grade because the teacher believed she was "dumb." Ella was always very thin and was teased for being skinny, but she never allowed adults or children to dictate her hopes and expectations. She says that "children need to know that they can't allow other people to dictate to them. When I was born, I was my mother's runt—the third girl, born on the third of June, and weighing three pounds, but I always believed that I was as good as anyone else." When she first ran for public office, she lost twice before winning in her third race, where she represented the third district. She never gave up and realized the importance of trying. She gives us the message that "If you don't ever try you never win. You have to have that inner tenacity to push forward."

Ella Butler Scarborough hopes that students today will understand how important education is and not allow anyone to dictate to them what they are capable of—as a student or as a person. She tells young people, "Don't allow anyone to tell you what you can't do. It's between you and God—and my God tells me the sky is the limit."

ELLA BUTLER SCARBOROUGH: LEADING FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

DIRECTIONS

After reading the interview with Ella Butler Scarborough, discuss the questions and complete the activities below.

ACTIVITIES

1. Make a list of the barriers that Ella Butler Scarborough encountered. Describe how she responded to these barriers.

2. Write an editorial telling how you would feel if you were kept out of a movie theater or bowling alley. Discuss what you think should be done about barriers—whether attitudes or policies—that discriminate against particular groups of people.

3. List the barriers you have encountered. Describe what have you done—or what you can do—to overcome them.

4. Interview one or more women in your family or community who were involved with the U.S. Civil Rights movement from the 1960s to the present. Find out what motivated them to be involved, what they see as current issues, and what their hopes are for the future.

5. Think about your own life. Are there areas in which you—or others in your school or community—experience discrimination? Identify at least one area and determine an action that could be taken to address and improve that area.

SELECTED STUDENT RESOURCES

BOOKS

Barbara Jordan: Congresswoman, Linda Johnson, Independent Publishers Group, Chicago, IL, 1993. A biography of the well-known humanitarian and legislator.

Book of Black Heroes: Great Women in the Struggle, Toyomi Igus, Just Us Books, Inc., Trenton, NJ, 1991. The biographies in this book represent a wide variety of successful women, including writers, scientists, activists, athletes, and policymakers.

Born for Liberty: A History of Women in America, Sara M. Evans, The Free Press, New York, NY, 1989. A comprehensive multicultural overview of U.S. women's history.

Contributions of Black Women to America, Marianna W. Davis, Women's Educational Equity Act Program, U.S. Department of Education, Kenday Press Inc., Columbia, SC, 1982. A historical tribute to Black women's contributions throughout the United States.

Fannie Lou Hamer and the Fight for the Vote, Penny Colman, Millbrook Publishing, Brookfield, CT, 1993. Taking tremendous risks, Fanny Lou Hamer created a path for all to follow toward political power through the right to vote.

Female Leaders: Profiles of Great Black Americans, Richard Rennert, ed., Chelsea House, New York, NY, 1994. Biographies of eight contemporary and historic African American women whose lives have been dedicated to human equality. Included are Coretta Scott King, Madam C. J. Walker, and Ida B. Wells-Barnett.

Female Writers: Profiles of Great Black Americans, Richard Rennert, ed., Chelsea House, New York, NY, 1994. Eight writers who provide insight into the African American experience are included in this book. Among them are Lorraine Hansberry and Maya Angelou.

Freedom's Children: Young Civil Rights Activists Tell Their Own Stories, Ellen LeVine, Avon Flaire, New York, NY, 1993. These interviews are from young people who grew up in cities and towns in Alabama, Mississippi, and Arkansas. And there were thousands more like them in the South. They shared a common goal to work together for civil rights.

From Pocahontas to Power Suits: Everything You Need to Know About Women's History in America, Kay Mills, Plume Book, New York, NY, 1995. A textbook that highlights the history of women in the United States. It is a book that fills in the gap for middle school students and relates information that is not commonly found in traditional textbooks. It also contains an excellent bibliography on specific topics.

I'll Be Back Again, Cynthia Rylant, Orchard Books, New York, NY, 1992. The compelling story of Cynthia Rylant's Appalachian upbringing.

Missing May, Cynthia Rylant, Orchard Books, New York, NY, 1993. A fictional story about Summer and her uncle Ob, and their journey through grief after Aunt May dies. This book was a 1993 Newberry winner.

Mississippi Challenge, Mildred Pitts Walker, Simon & Schuester (Alladin Paperbacks), New Jersey, 1992. The book discusses the direct action ordinary people took in order to ensure civil rights in Mississippi. For almost a century, these people had to struggle just for the right to vote, but they were determined to change the political system.

The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It, David J. Garrow, ed., University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, TN, 1993. A firsthand account, written by a behind-the-scenes organizer, on the contributions of women to the Civil Rights movement. The book includes photos, a glossary of individuals, and a chronology of events.

Mother Jones: One Woman's Fight for Labor, Kraft, Houghton Mifflin Co., Burlington, MA, 1995. A biography that offers a detailed and realistic history of the labor activist.

Notable Black American Women, Jessie Carney Smith, ed., Gale Research, Inc., Detroit, MI, 1992. Biographies of historical and contemporary Black women.

Take a Walk in Their Shoes, Glennette Tilley Turner, Dutton Children's Books, New York, NY, 1989. Biographies of social and political African American activists who made a difference in peoples' lives. Included are Rosa Parks, Ida B. Wells, and Maggie Lena Walker. There are skits to act out after each biography.

To Win These Rights, Lucy Randolph Mason, Greenwood Press, Westport, CT, 1952. Autobiography of activist Lucy Randolph Mason.

Women of the South

- Gullah Women

INTRODUCTION: THE GULLAHS: PROUD PEOPLE

Remember the bridges that carry you over.

—Gullah Proverb

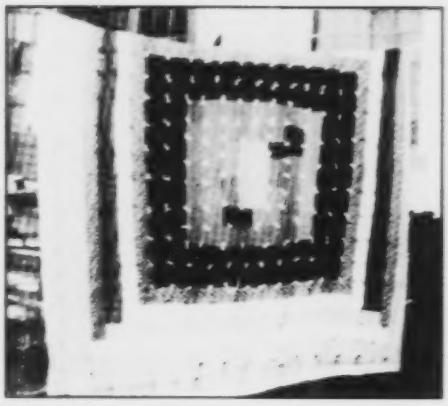


Photo by Willish Branch.

OVERVIEW

"Hope lives when people remember" are words that explain how important it is for people to remember their past. These remembrances help us to deal with the future. Remembering the oral traditions through stories and song helps a group to preserve and maintain culture that is important and unique to that group. Oral history is the recording of stories and the history of an individual or a group. It is a powerful vehicle for maintaining history, customs, traditions, and language of a group.

The Gullahs, a group of people who are descendants of slaves from West Africa, maintained over 200 years of their "Africanism" by passing on stories, songs, recipes, quilting, and basketmaking through many generations of oral tradition. The Gullah women have played a vital role in preserving Gullah culture. The Gullahs have lived in an area called the Sea Islands, which extends from the coast of North Carolina to Florida. Due to their isolation from the mainland, these proud people raised their own food, made their own clothing, and maintained their own language.

This language is a combination of West African language, Creole, and English, and is still spoken today. To an outsider, this language may be difficult to read or speak. Thousands of African words have been recorded in the speech of Gullah people. This list of words includes personal names, words used in

Strip quilt, displayed at Penn Center, St. Helena, SC. SOURCE: *The Water Brought Us: The Story of the Gullah-Speaking People*, Muriel Miller Branch, Cobblehill Books, New York, 1995.

conversation, and some expressions heard only in stories, songs, and prayers. Some Gullahs are ashamed of this language.

Author Virginia Hamilton has written about folktales from this region, such as the Br'er Rabbit stories. In her book, *The People Could Fly*, she notes:

> *Folktales take us back to the very beginnings of people's lives, to their hopes and their defeats. American folktales originated with people, most of whom long ago were brought from Africa to this country against their will. . . . Black folktales were first recorded in the late nineteenth century. In 1880, journalist Joel Chandler Harris collected some of the oral literature of the slaves in Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings. . . . As do the folktales, keep close all the past that was good, and that remains full of promise.*

SOURCES: *The Gullah: "People Blessed by God" Amazing Facts About the Gullah People and More*, Ilaila Olela Afika, Goldenseal, Beaufort, SC, 1989. *The People Could Fly: American Black Folktales*, told by Virginia Hamilton, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, NY, 1985.

DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST

The Gullah language and traditions received more attention in 1992 when Julie Dash, the first African American female filmmaker, brought to the world a beautiful story about the Gullahs living in the Sea Islands of South Carolina. Her father was born in this region, but later moved his family to New York City. Dash, like others from this region, grew up being embarrassed about the language and customs of her family. Over the years, her father would tell her stories about the land, the families who lived there, and their ancestors. She held them in her mind and heart. She decided to do research so that she and others would learn about this proud group that was missing from the pages of many books and the maps of the United States. Julie Dash wanted to bridge the gap between the Gullah island people and the rest of the world. The moving film story of these remarkable people won a national award as "best film."

The task of collecting, researching, and recording is the basis for an oral history project. Julie Dash began her oral history project, and the material for her film, by interviewing family, friends, and strangers. She wove stories about the strength of the Gullah people. As the first female African American filmmaker, Dash gave a new voice to a group that had long been silenced. She was determined to lift the veil about the Gullah people, their places, and their things. Her film, *Daughters of the Dust*, is about her family and the many families rich in history but long forgotten by the historians.

In her film, she includes a story about the Ibos, who were brought as slaves to the Sea Islands of South Carolina to harvest cotton, indigo, and rice for the white plantation owners. These slave owners could not tolerate the hot, muggy conditions of the Sea Islands, so they retreated to cities further north. This flight and other factors created the isolated island environment, and the strength that the Gullah developed.

She tells the Ibos' legend like this: Once off the ship at the shore of South Carolina Sea Island, they decided this new land would never be home for them. The brave African tribe, women, men, and children, fifty in all, joined hands and walked back into and on top of the water. They believed that their souls would be taken back to their African homeland, where they belonged. The

word *Gullah* originates from "Gull" meaning God, and "ah," a word placed before or after another word, usually referring to a blessing. Translated, Gullah means "people blessed by God."

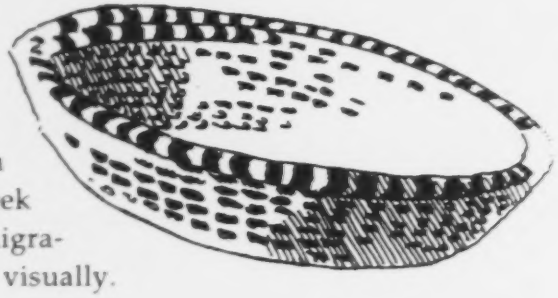
The film speaks of the bond of descendants of African slaves from Sierra Leone and other West African countries, their language, and their customs. Julie Dash gives names to these Sea Islands where the slaves were brought during the seventeenth century and where her ancestors and descendants of other ancestors still live today: Edisto, St. Helena, St. Simon, Dafuskie, Sapelo, Johns, James, and Jekyll Island. In the film, we learn how the Gullahs paint doors royal blue, as found in the Egyptian pyramid of Giza. This color represents the highest order of wisdom and the worship of God. We also learn how glass bottles are placed on a tree outside the home in memory of deceased family members, how the slaves worked to harvest the famous Charleston cotton, and toiled to harvest indigo and rice.

Julie Dash shows connections and connectors throughout her story, based on voices taken from her taped interviews. We learn about the influence of the Cherokee Indians in this area, and the naming of names like Iona (I own her), Monday (the day the child was born), or Pete and Repeat (twins). The main ingredients that formed gumbo were goobers (peanuts) brought on the slave ship *Wanderer* or okra brought from Africa, shrimp harvested off the Carolina shores, and corn. We also learn how Gullah women were usually the keepers of their many traditions—traditions they passed on before many families journeyed from the old world, across the bridge, to a new world—as they left the South to find a better life "up north."

Picking cotton. SOURCE: The University of South Carolina archives.

TEXT SOURCE: *The Making of an American Woman's Film: Daughters of the Dust*, Julie Dash, The New Press, New York, NY, 1992.

JOURNEYS



Many former slaves migrated from the South to the North in order to seek a better life. The stories of these migrations have been depicted orally and visually.

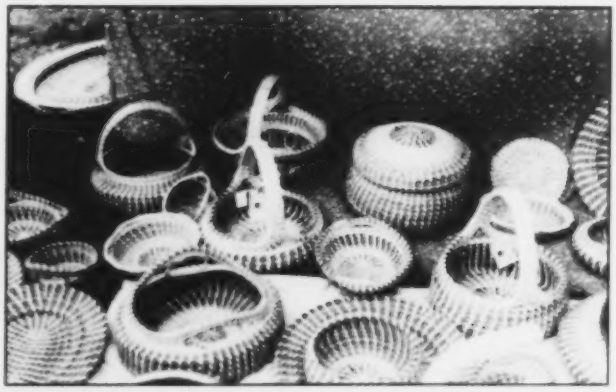
DIRECTIONS

1. Interview an adult member of your family, a neighbor, a teacher, or a friend. Ask questions about the "journeys" they have had to make in their lives. Pick one journey and ask the following questions: Was it a difficult task for them? Which event in history had an impact on the journey they had to make, and why? What were their feelings before the journey? What were their feelings after the journey was made?

2. Think about a journey that you have had to make (for example, a transition from elementary school to middle school). Was it easy for you to make a decision about when and how you would make this journey? What help did you need (if any) in order for you to make this journey in life?

3. Create an art project to show others about a journey you have had to make. Use different art media to express your feelings. Have the class present an exhibit, or do as Julie Dash did, and make a movie (or video) about your journey.

4. Discuss the following: Is there ever an end to the journeys we must make in life? Why?



Gullah baskets. Photo courtesy of Diane Swift.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

"I CAN'T HEAR YOU": SHARING YOUR VOICE

Virginia Hamilton is an author of books about African folktales and the Gullah language. Two of her most recent books are *The People Could Fly* and *Her Stories*. Read these stories to learn about the history of African folktales and how the Gullah language was used throughout these stories.

Remember the voices from the past. As do the folktales, keep close all the past that was good, and that remains full of promise.

DIRECTIONS

Write a short story using words or phrases common to your age group, locale, or school. Think of the following as you craft your story. Share your story with family members and friends.

1. Do the students at your school have their own system of language?
2. How hard is it to understand the language that is used?
3. Who is responsible for creating the words or phrases unique to your age group?
4. Do the males in your school speak a different language than the females? If yes, why?
5. How is the language pattern of the administrators/teachers in your school different from that of your peer group. What about your parents?
6. Record all the phrases or colloquialisms associated with the language you speak. Make a chart and post it in your classroom.

7. Has anyone tried to change or alter your language in any way? Is this a good thing or a bad? Why?

8. List ways that communication between groups can be improved.

9. List the many ways that a person can express his or her voice. (Examples: music, theater, visual, art, dance, writing.)

10. Think of some contemporary artists and how they express their stories and talent. List ways they do so. (Examples: hip-hop music, rap.) If someone disagrees with the message, should the voice be silenced? Why or why not?

11. Think of a way to improve understanding among various groups such as intergenerational voices, multicultural voices, gender voices.

Photo by Gabriel Kuperman

The Gullah hand clap. SOURCE: *The Water Brought Us: The Story of the Gullah-Speaking People,* Muriel Miller Branch, Cobblehill Books, New York, 1995.

THE GIFT OF STORY

The ultimate gift of story is twofold: that at least one soul remains who can tell the story, and that by the recounting of the tale, the greater forces of love, mercy, generosity and strength are continuously called into being in the world. Tales, legends, myths and folklore are learned, developed, numbered and preserved. . . . A collection of cultural stories, and especially family stories, is considered as necessary for long and strong life as decent food, decent relationship and decent work.

—Clarissa Pinkola Estes, Ph.D.
Women Who Run with the Wolves

DIRECTIONS

1. Read a folktale or legend about the South, such as a Br'er Rabbit story. Note how many female characters are in the story and how they are portrayed.

2. Write a folktale with a female character as the hero.

THE JOURNEY OF TWO

Sometimes in life, the journeys we make are planned. Then there are times when no matter how much we plan, there are other journeys that we must take. The following two stories were told by these women to an audience at a recent symposium about Gullah life at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Vertamae Smart-Grosvenor and Eva Wright are two women who did not make the same journeys in life but, because they share a common bond, ended up at the same place. Vertamae and Eva are both Black, both are descendants of the slaves who toiled in the rice fields in the Sea Islands, and both women's survival was dependent upon their journeys.

AFRICAN CONNECTIONS: GULLAH PEOPLE, CULTURE, AND LOW-COUNTRY FOODS

Vertamae Smart-Grosvenor,
Eva Wright,
Alpha Bah (Associate Professor of History,
College of Charleston, South Carolina),
Karen Hess, food historian and
author of *A Carolina Rice Kitchen*, and
Terrell Danley, Executive Chef of
Georgia Brown's Restaurant, Washington, D.C.,
journeyed
to the Smithsonian
to tell
of the culture
and courage
of the
GULLAHS.

VERTAMAE SMART-GROSVENOR

We call weself Geechee.

—Vertamae Smart-Grosvenor

Neither the passage of time nor distance has weakened the Gullah connection.

—Family Across the Sea

Vertamae Smart-Grosvenor was born in the village of Fairfax in Allendale County, South Carolina. When she was eleven years old, her family moved "up north" to Philadelphia, leaving behind her Geechee roots (or so she thought). She was glad to be moving away from the Sea Islands, the songs, and customs that were brought over from Africa, and from her family members who "talked funny."

Although Vertamae was happy to be in Philadelphia, she was afraid to speak the lilting Gullah language that was a part of her family and the region she left behind. Her classmates made fun of the Gullah language they did not understand. All the people in her family knew the language, she thought, so why are they making fun of me? Her classmates taunted Vertamae and called her the "bad talking, rice eating Geechee from South Carolina."

It was true that Vertamae's family ate rice every day, three or more times. Her mother told her that this tradition was known as "Africanisms" common to the Gullah people. Her mother wanted her to be proud of all the "Africanism" of the slaves brought to these shores many, many years ago. Vertamae was not, and could not feel proud. She did not like being a Geechee. She was made to feel different because of her heritage. By the age of eighteen, Vertamae hated school so much that she dropped out. With her parents' blessings, Vertamae

decided to journey to Paris, France. This trip was the beginning of what Vertamae would come to realize as "her first journey home." She could not be a Geechee in Paris. Surrounded by artists and writers and intellectuals, Vertamae told her Parisian friends that she was from Harlem, New York. During those times, Harlem was the hub of African American culture. To Vertamae, it sounded a lot better than saying she was a Geechee from Allendale County, South Carolina.

Vertamae enjoyed Paris, but decided after many years that it was time for her to return "home." She returned to the United States in 1960. She was not, however, journeying alone. With her were pages of writings for a book about food. While living abroad, Vertamae was fascinated with the journeys of foods in uniting people in their cultures, no matter where they are. She began this book in Paris because she found she was more comfortable with the written word. The artist Romare Bearden told Vertamae during an interview that "an artist needs to rescue something and make it their own." Her writing took shape and form, and a publisher in New York decided to print what she had to say. There was one word in the title that the publisher did not want to print, because the publisher felt that readers would not know its meaning. Vertamae fought to have the word *Geechee* included in the title. She learned through her journeys to be proud of who she is and the beautiful heritage she inherited. Twenty-three years later, Vertamae's book, *Vibration Cooking, or the Travel Notes of a Geechee Girl*, has journeyed to the home of many people, and many places, both near and far.

Many have enjoyed Vertamae's book, but her journeys in life are far from over. She was the consultant and played the role of the hair braider in the film *Daughters of the Dust*. This film took her back to St. Helena's Island, and Beaufort, and all the places she has grown to love. It was Vertamae's role to prepare the world for the unveiling of the culture she denied. The film was a huge success, and Vertamae can be proud of her role in making certain that the "bad talking, rice eating Geechees" in the film, and all over the world, would make their ancestors proud.

AFRICANISMS AS TOLD BY VERTAMAE SMART-GROSVENOR

Gullah people eat rice every day

Every grain to itself (rice should never clump together)

Wash the rice three times, and once again for the pot

Stayed in the creek (fishing for the seafood that was the staple for most meals)

Sun breaks for down (evening)

If I don't see you no more here, I'll see you in Africa

Gullah people never talk straight; never talk straight-up
(conversations are laced with riddles, rhymes, proverbs)

Cold milk should be kept in the cow

Hope is a good breakfast but makes a bad supper

EVA WRIGHT

Even though I cannot go, I will send my baskets everywhere.

—Eva Wright

Eva Wright's journey was different from that of Vertamae, but there were many things they shared. Like Vertamae, Eva was ashamed of being a Gullah and living on the Sea Islands of South Carolina.

Growing up Gullah meant that Eva would sit for hours upon hours with her grandmother, learning how to make beautiful coil baskets. Her grandmother told her that the designs for the baskets were brought here by slaves from Africa. Eva's grandmother wanted to make certain that she continued the legacy the basketmakers were known for, in the tiny town of Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina.

As Eva sewed each basket, she dreamed of places far away from Mt. Pleasant. No longer did Eva want to be called Geechee girl. No more stories about Africans, no more songs from Africa, no more rice, or gumbo, or sweet grass baskets. Eva hated making the baskets that sold for 50 cents or $2.00 at the basket shanties on Highway 17. To Eva, there was nothing sweet about sweet grass baskets.

So Eva began her journey as a young girl, leaving Mt. Pleasant and moving to New York, a bustling city "up north" and miles away from her Gullah roots. Unlike her ancestors before her who rarely left these closed islands, Eva left her grandmother and her heritage (or so she thought). FREEDOM at last!

Eva remained in the bustling city that was so different from Mt. Pleasant. Over the years, something very strange began to happen to her. As much as she tried, she could not forget the stories her grandmothers told her about the people of Africa. Eva remembered their songs, their food, but she also realized that the songs and stories and foods of her ancestors were also hers.

Eva found herself remembering the good times more than the bad—the way she used to sit by the old wood-burning stove, by the light of a hurricane lamp, sewing sweet grass baskets while her grandmother sang songs. She also remembered her grandmother saying "Child, wherever you go, don't give up your baskets." All of these "haunts" let Eva know that it was time for a new journey to old places. It was time to go home.

In 1994, thirty-eight years later, Eva returned to the people, the language, and the culture she could not forget. It felt so good to smell the sweet grass, the bulrush, the palm needles, and palm leaves used to make the baskets her grandmother taught her how to make.

To this day, Eva is making beautiful baskets for all of the visitors who come to Mt. Pleasant. Each basket she makes is a tribute to her grandmother, her great-grandmother, and all of the Africans who made the journey to these shores. Eva sits each day, quiet and content, singing songs like "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot, Coming for to Carry Me Home." As she weaves her basket, Eva knows that her grandmother, and her other ancestors, and all the Gullah people are proud.

Basketmaker's stand, Old City Market, Charleston, SC. SOURCE: *The Water Brought Us: The Story of the Gullah-Speaking People*, Muriel Miller Branch, Cobblehill Books, New York, NY, 1995.

MARY A. JACKSON: BASKETMAKER

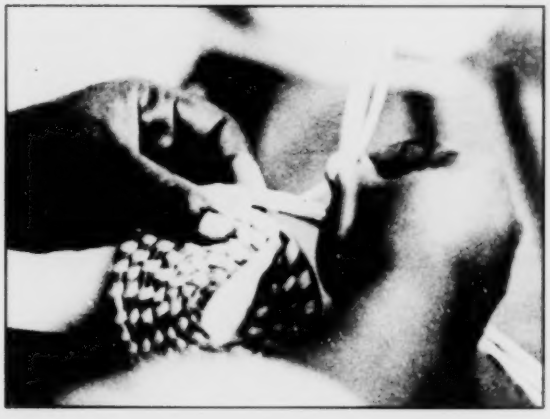
Mary A. Jackson is a resident of Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina, an area rich in Gullah traditions. It is the home of many of the original families who make sweet grass baskets. This craft was brought to this area by slaves from West Africa. The coiling method used to make the baskets has been passed down from generation to generation. This interview was conducted while Ms. Jackson demonstrated how to make sweet grass baskets during the National Folklife Festival in Washington, D.C.

How long does it take to make a basket?

Several are started at one time. Some baskets can take two years to make. I build the basket to a certain point or I will make a collection of smaller baskets.

What are the various styles of baskets?

The styles have been maintained for 300 years from Africa. There is a flat rice basket, the tall journey basket used to carry food. The flat basket is the style that is taught first using sweet grass. The young people are taught to build many shapes from the flat, like trays for vegetables or flowers, or it can be used for hot rolls or fruit. The bread basket is oval and round.



Beginning a basket. SOURCE: *Row upon Row: Sea Grass Baskets of the South Carolina Lowcountry,* Dale Rosengarten, The McKissick Museum, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, 1986.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Are any baskets your personal design?

Yes. I have created a flared bowl, a basket with a handle, and a large covered basket. The French knots on the basket are made from pine needles. The origin of the design comes from the West African countries of Senegal and the Ivory Coast.

How many families are still making baskets?

In the 1920s, more than 2,500 families made and sold baskets. Currently, less than 300 families make sweet grass baskets.

What roles do men play in the production of baskets?

The men harvest grasses needed for the baskets. They search along coastal wetlands. With all the development in the region, they must seek permission of some property owners to get the grass needed. There is a scarcity of grasses and now we are trying to grow sweet grass in soil other than their natural habitat. Sweet grass has a strong root system. In addition to sweet grass, we use bulrush and palmetto. Women are also learning how to harvest. The elderly who make baskets will get help from a relative to gather the grasses needed for their baskets. The men made mostly baskets for agricultural purposes and even for boats. Few men, today, practice the art.

A display of Mary Jackson's baskets. SOURCE: *National Geographic* magazine, The National Geographic Society, Washington, DC, Vol. 172, No. 6, December 1987.

What roles do young people play in preserving this history and culture?

It is difficult to get children to make baskets. The work can take many days, and the children usually make the mats (beginning stages) for adults to complete. This allows the young people to keep in touch with this tradition and their culture. Two generations of work can be found in one basket. I taught my daughter when she was very young. Children would rather work as teachers, engineers, etc., instead of making baskets. Basketmaking was a course given in public schools but it is not doing well.

How has development in this region affected the production and sale of baskets?

Everyone who makes baskets lives in Mt. Pleasant. Highway 17 is the area where the basketmakers sell their baskets. Due to real estate development, there are fewer and fewer stands. The basketmakers have been displaced and the Sweet Grass Shopping Center or Housing Development is now where the women used to work. Peter Jennings did a special television report about this problem. Because of this, the basketmakers have migrated north to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Development of the land threatens the basket-making tradition. Mt. Pleasant is the sixth largest city in South Carolina. Basketmaking is a dying art and we encourage people to hold onto them. Older women never grant interviews to outsiders. The oldest basket can be found in the Charleston Museum and it dates to the late 1800s.

Mrs. Jackson teaches basketmaking skills to her daughter, April. SOURCE: *National Geographic* magazine, The National Geographic Society, Washington, DC, Vol. 172, No. 6, December 1987.

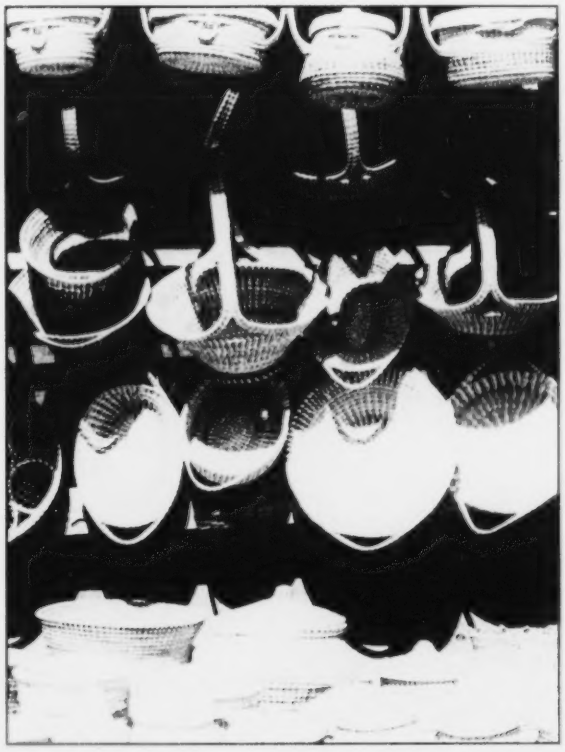
CULTURE AND CRAFTS

Sweet grass baskets have been made by Gullah women in the South in what is now South Carolina for 300 years. The knowledge and skills for making these baskets were brought from Africa by slave women, and Gullah women continue the basketmaking traditions.

DIRECTIONS

1. Discuss what the word *craft* means. Give examples of items that are made by hand today.

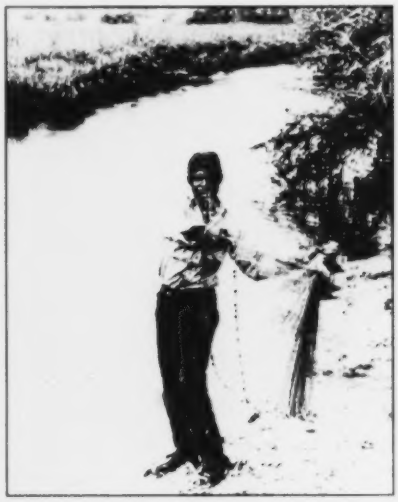
2. Research crafts from different cultures reflected in the United States today (for example, Navajo weaving, Hopi pottery, quiltmaking from different regions and cultures, such as Hmong and Amish). Are the crafts usually created by women or by men? Why? Why are certain crafts found in specific cultures? What do the crafts tell you about the culture or region in which they are made?



3. Explore your home and community and identify handcrafted items. Visit a craft fair, craft shop, or museum and interview craftspeople. Find out if anyone in your family today or in the past made craft items.

Sea grass baskets for sale. SOURCE: *Row upon Row: Sea Grass Baskets of the South Carolina Lowcountry*, Dale Rosengarten, The McKissick Museum, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, 1986.

"I AM SAPELO"
BY CORNELIA BAILEY



I am here to represent Sapelo Island, a little hammock on the Georgia Coast. It's a dying form of life we have here. In some ways I relish the new way, while at the same time I feel such a heavy loss for the vanishing of the old ways.

Life on Sapelo goes on much as it does anywhere else, but if you get to really see and feel what's here, you will see the difference. The proud faces as well as the angry walk, the easy smile as well as the hard frown, the easy life as well as the hardship, it's all there reflected in the faces and stature of each individual. The old who don't want to change and the young who do. But get to know the young ones and you will see tradition and hear pride. We are all proud of our heritage.

I can still see the ladies at such places as Raccoon Bluff fishing with a drop line and cane pole from a batteau boat, while trusting in the Lord because they couldn't swim; the men fishing at night with flambeau, looking for alligators with a long pole and giant hook.

DIRECTIONS

1. Read the words above written by Cornelia Bailey about life on a Georgia island.
2. Write a description of a day in your life.
3. Compare your story with the story of Cornelia Bailey's life.

Fisherman throwing his net. SOURCE: *The Water Brought Us: The Story of the Gullah-Speaking People*, Muriel Miller Branch, Cobblehill Books, New York, NY, 1995.

SELECTED STUDENT RESOURCES

BOOKS

The Bridges of Summer, Brenda Seabrook, Puffin Books, New York, NY, 1992. Story of a fourteen year old sent from the Midwest to visit her grandmother in South Carolina and to learn about the Sea Islands and a valuable lesson in life.

I Been in Sorrow's Kitchen and Licked All the Pots, Susan Straight, Hyperion, New York, NY, 1992. This novel is set in the low-country of South Carolina near Charleston. Susan Straight paints a picture with words about the life, language, and local traditions of the Gullahs.

I Know What the Red Clay Looks Like: The Voices and Visions of Black Women Writers, Rebecca Carroll, Crown Trade Paperbacks, New York, NY, 1994. A collection of stories for and about women written by contemporary writers.

Ready from Within, Cynthia Stokes Brown, Africa World Press, Inc., Trenton, NJ, 1990. Story of Septima Clark who was born in Charleston, South Carolina, worked for the Highlander Folk School, and was instrumental in the Civil Rights movement. Based on oral interviews.

Step It Down, Bessie Jones and Bess Lomax Hawes, Philomel Books, New York, NY, 1992. This book tells the stories, games, and songs of the Sea Islands people. Students will learn about escape songs like "Wade in the Water" and "Swing Low Sweet Chariot" sung by slaves on the Underground Railroad, to signal movement of slaves seeking freedom and safety in the North.

Toning the Sweep, Angela Johnson, Scholastic Books, New York, NY, 1994. A novel for young adults about the African American family experience.

Vibration Cooking, or the Travel Notes of a Geechee Girl, Vertamae Smart-Grosvenor, Ballantine Books, New York, NY, 1992. A collection of tempting recipes and homespun memories about life in the Gullah region, written by a true Geechee girl.

The Water Brought Us: The Story of the Gullah-Speaking People, Muriel Miller Branch, Cobblehill Books, New York, NY, 1995. History of the Gullah people and their origins in the United States.

The Water Is Wide, Pat Conroy, Bantam Books, New York, NY, 1972. Based on a true story, this book is a beautiful story about a teacher who spends a year on Yamacraw Island in South Carolina, not far from Savannah, Georgia. The twentieth century has basically ignored the presence of Yamacraw. No bridge gives access to the island, but the teacher and the children cross many bridges together and realize how much they need each other.

VIDEO

Family Across the Sea, South Carolina Educational TV, P. O. Box 11000, Columbia, SC 29211. 56 minutes, 1990. This documentary grew out of a visit by Joseph Momoh, former president of Sierra Leone, to St. Helena Island, South Carolina, in 1988.

WORLD WIDE WEB SITES

Gullah Gourmet Online
http://www.evolink.com/gullah
Website devoted specifically to Gullah culture, cuisine, and history.

Georgia Sea Island Singers Web Page
http://www.gacoast.com/navigator/quimbys.html
Information about the Gullah language and culture on the islands off the Georgia coast.

UNIT 3
Immigrant Women

- The Experience of Immigrant Women
- Latino Women
- Soviet Jewish Women
- Vietnamese Women

Immigrant Women

- The Experience of Immigrant Women

INTRODUCTION: IMMIGRANT WOMEN

As a woman I have no country.
As a woman my country is the whole world.

—Virginia Woolf
Writer

Have you ever moved to a new school, neighborhood, town, city, state, or country? How did you learn about your new surroundings? What problems or challenges did you face? What did you like or dislike about your new surroundings? What things were similar or different about your old home and new home? What memories and experiences did you bring with you to your new setting?

In the last twenty years, more immigrants have come to the United States than during the previous fifty years. Individuals have come for many reasons, including to escape war, to seek jobs or education, to join family members who were already here, and to lead a better life.

In 1994, of the almost 260 million people living in the United States, more than 22 million were born in other countries. These people immigrated to the United States from more than 100 different nations. Because of its history, America has been called "a nation of immigrants." Every person who was not a Native American (American Indian) came

Artwork by Zoya Nudelman, age 13, immigrant from the former Soviet Union. Picture courtesy of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, 1995.

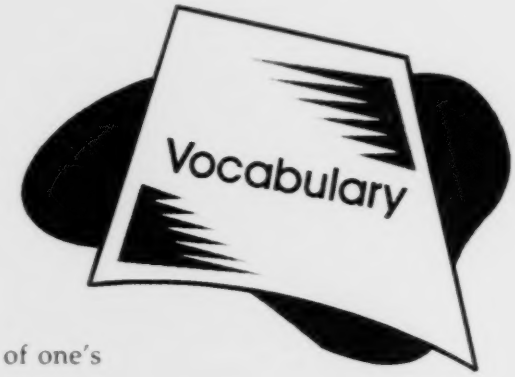
to the United States from somewhere else. Throughout history, some people came by choice, seeking a better life, and some came against their will in chains, as slaves. Some came to escape war or discrimination, and some came hoping to find riches, better jobs, or new opportunities. Some were indentured servants with a promise that by working for several years, they would earn their freedom. And some were criminals who were forced by law to leave their homeland. Regardless of why they came, every person and every group have contributed to American culture and the richness of our society in the United States.

In this unit, you will learn about the experiences of women from three cultural groups who immigrated to the United States from the 1970s to the 1990s—Latino women, Jewish women from the former Soviet Union, and Vietnamese women. Although each woman and group of women had very different experiences, they all shared much in common—the challenge of leaving their native land, of learning a new language and new customs, and of creating a new life for themselves and their families.

As you complete the activities in this unit, think of your own experiences in making changes or moving from one place to another. Look around you at the varieties of people who go to your school and who live in your neighborhood and state. Reflect on the challenges faced by recent immigrants as well as your own ancestors, whether they were born in America or came from another country. Become more aware of the many things that each group has contributed to your community and to the United States.

Artwork by David Bratslavsky, age 10, immigrant from the former Soviet Union. Picture courtesy of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, 1995.

VOCABULARY



Become familiar with the following terms used throughout this unit.

IMMIGRANT WOMEN

Discrimination — Unfair treatment because of one's "differentness."

Emigrate — To leave one's home and move to another country.

Foreign Born — A person living in a country other than where he or she was born.

Immigrant — A person who moves into a country in order to live there permanently.

Immigrate — To move permanently into a country.

Native — A person living in the country where he or she was born.

Naturalized Citizen —A person from another country who has met the requirements established by the U.S. government to become a citizen, including having lived in the United States for five years and having passed a citizenship test.

Refugee — A person outside of her or his country of birth who is unable or unwilling to return to that country because of persecution or fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group.

Visa — A document needed by an immigrant to enter the United States (or certain other countries) legally.

LATINO WOMEN

Bilingual — Able to speak two languages.

Boycott — An organized refusal to buy or use a particular product or service in order to force acceptance of certain changes, such as better working conditions.

Migrant Workers — Seasonal farmworkers who travel from place to place to find work.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

La Causa — "The Cause." A movement begun in the 1960s by César Chávez and migrant farmworkers to form a union to win better working conditions and civil rights.

La Llorona — A Mexican folktale.

Latina/Latino — Women/men from Mexico, South America, Central America, and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean countries living in the United States.

SOVIET JEWISH WOMEN

Anti-Semitism — Discrimination through attitudes or actions against Jews.

Pogrom — An attack against Jews in Russia and Eastern Europe during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Refusenik — A person who applied to emigrate from the Soviet Union but was refused permission to leave.

VIETNAMESE WOMEN

Oppression — Subduing an individual or a group of people by the cruel or unjust use of power or authority.

Unification — The joining together of different people or countries.

WHAT IS IT LIKE . . . ?

What is it like to move to another school, another community, another city or town, another state? What is it like to **emigrate** from your home country, and to **immigrate**, or come to, another country?

DIRECTIONS

1. Answer the following Questions to Explore in writing. In a small group, compare your responses with those of other students, and make a chart summarizing the responses.

2. Interview a student who has moved recently to your school. Use the Questions to Explore below as a guide. Find out what would have been most useful in helping them adjust to their new school.

3. Using a map of the world and of the United States, mark where all of the students in your class have lived.

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE

1. For what reasons might someone move to another community or country?

2. Have you ever moved to another community or country? Why did you move? Where did you move from and where did you settle?

3. What did you already know about the area you were moving to?

4. What kinds of new information did you and your family need when you moved in order to adjust to your new home? (Examples: how to find a place to live, where to buy food, what the climate is like, how to speak a new language.) If you have never moved, what information would anyone who changed communities need to know?

5. What did you miss most about where you lived before you moved? What were the major problems or concerns you had in adjusting to your new home?

6. What or who helped you settle and adjust to your new surroundings?

7. What did you like most about your new life?

8. Add your own question: _____

Artwork by Boris Rapoport, age 14, immigrant from the former Soviet Union. Picture courtesy of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, 1995.

K-W-C: WHAT I KNOW, WHAT I WANT TO KNOW, WHAT I HAVE LEARNED ABOUT IMMIGRANT WOMEN

DIRECTIONS

Fill in the first two columns of the chart below at the beginning of this unit, and the last column at the end of the unit.

WHAT I KNOW	WHAT I WANT TO KNOW	WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

RESOURCES FOR NEW IMMIGRANTS

DIRECTIONS

Imagine that you are a newly arrived immigrant in your community. Think about what kinds of questions you would have and how you would find answers to your questions. Where would you find people or organizations to help you? Complete at least one of the activities below.

NEW IMMIGRANT ASSISTANCE

1. Make a list of questions you would have and assistance you would need as a new immigrant to your community. Compare your list with those of other students in a group. Include a discussion of any special assistance that you might need if you were a woman, a man, a child, an older person, or a person with a disability.

   As a new immigrant, I have the following questions:

   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.
   5.

   I need assistance in the following areas:

   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.
   5.

2. Identify resource organizations in your community that provide assistance to new immigrants. Make a class directory of these organizations, listing names, addresses, phone numbers, and a description of what services the group provides.

3. Discuss what you, your class, or your school could do to provide assistance to new immigrants. Design and complete an activity or project to assist a new student who has come to your school from another country.

Artwork by Kseniya Tuchinskaya, age 8, immigrant from the former Soviet Union. Picture courtesy of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, 1995.

WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR

DIRECTIONS

Read the paragraphs on the next page about "My Wishes for the New Year," written by immigrant students from the Ukraine, Peru, and Vietnam. Write your own paragraph or poem about your wishes for the coming year. Compare your wishes with those of one of the students whose poem you read.

My Wishes for the New Year

By Inna Knizhnik, twelve years old, from the Ukraine

Russian	*English*
Я хочу что бы в новом году я знала Английский лутче, чем я знала в прошлом году.	I wish that my English would be much better than it was last year.

By Elvia Canales, fifteen years old, from Peru

Spanish	*English*
Que todos los niños tengan las mismas oportunidades de triunfar.	That all children have the same opportunities to succeed.

By An Nguyên-Gia, twelve years old, from Vietnam

Vietnamese	*English*
Tôi ước mong được thăm viếng và học hoi thêm về phong tục tập quán cua quê hương mình.	I wish to visit my country and learn more about my culture.

BECOMING A CITIZEN: NEW AMERICAN CITIZEN IDA MILNER

REQUIREMENTS

To become a United States citizen, an immigrant from another country must go through a process that takes several years and involves learning to read and write English, studying U.S. history and government, passing a citizenship test, filling out many applications and forms, and taking an oath to be a loyal citizen.

STORY OF A NEW CITIZEN

Ida Milner came to the United States in 1990 from the city of Leningrad (now St. Petersburg), Russia, with her husband and young son. She left the former Soviet Union because she saw no democratic future there for her and her family, particularly as a person who faced special hardships because of her Jewish background. In order to get permission to leave the Soviet Union, she had to give up her Russian citizenship, so she came to America as a refugee—a person with no country to truly call her own. She had no family members here, but was made to feel welcome by the community in Baltimore, Maryland, where she settled.

By completing all of the difficult and complicated steps and paperwork required, Ida became a U.S. citizen six years after arriving in America. She found that the most difficult part was the paperwork and the most interesting was learning about the U.S. Constitution.

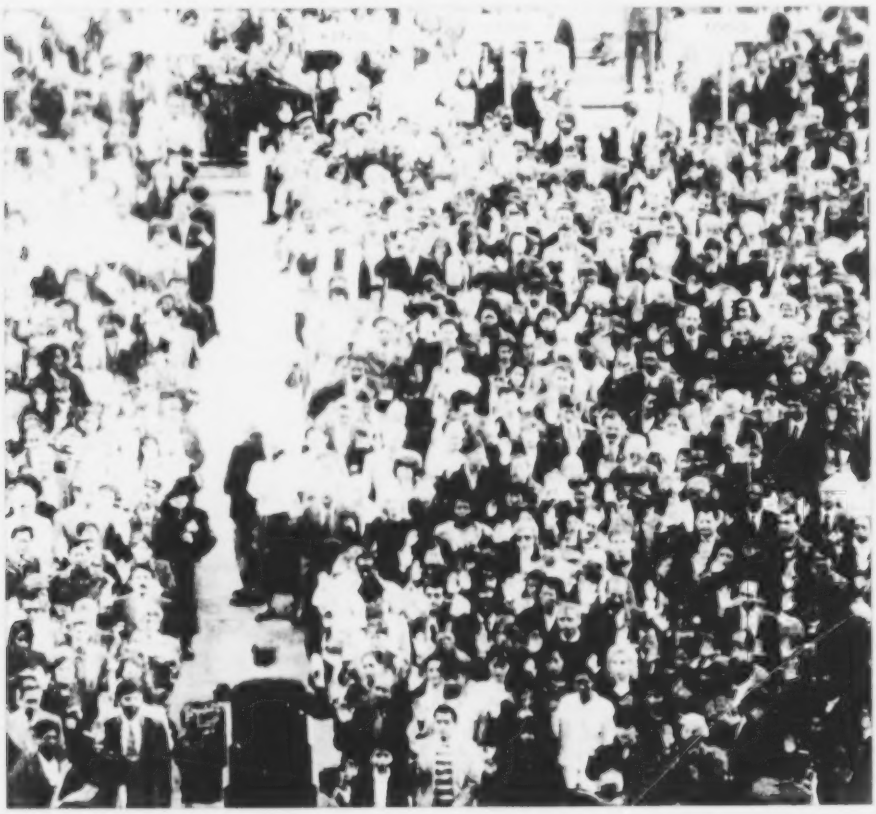
At first it was difficult to come from a harsh government like that of the Soviet Union and to understand the freedoms here—not just to understand them with the head but with the heart. . . . When I first arrived I couldn't understand why America would allow people to say negative things that seemed hurtful. But then I understood that this also gave me the freedom to speak out about what I believed. If you can't speak freely, then I can't either. So the Constitution makes sure that everyone has freedom of speech. . . . I sincerely believe that there is nothing better anywhere else than the Constitution of the United States.

As a woman, Ida felt that being an immigrant was especially challenging.

It seems easier for men to get jobs in technical fields here. There seems to be a pattern that some fields are more open to men than to women. In spite of equal rights, many Americans seem to resent strong women in politics and government. Attitudes seem to start early in school, where it is almost programmed in the mind about what women and men can do.

Ida became a citizen at a special ceremony for her and over 100 other immigrants from several countries around the world.

We had a beautiful ceremony with music, decorations, and special guests. There was a strong bond between us as new citizens and those citizens who welcomed us. I was honored that American people were welcoming us to their society as equals. When we took the oath of citizenship and each of us had our names called to introduce us as new citizens, it was very emotional, warm, and respectful. Our American friends who helped us settle and had been living with us through all our years of good and difficult times were at the ceremony with us. They were very, very happy for us.



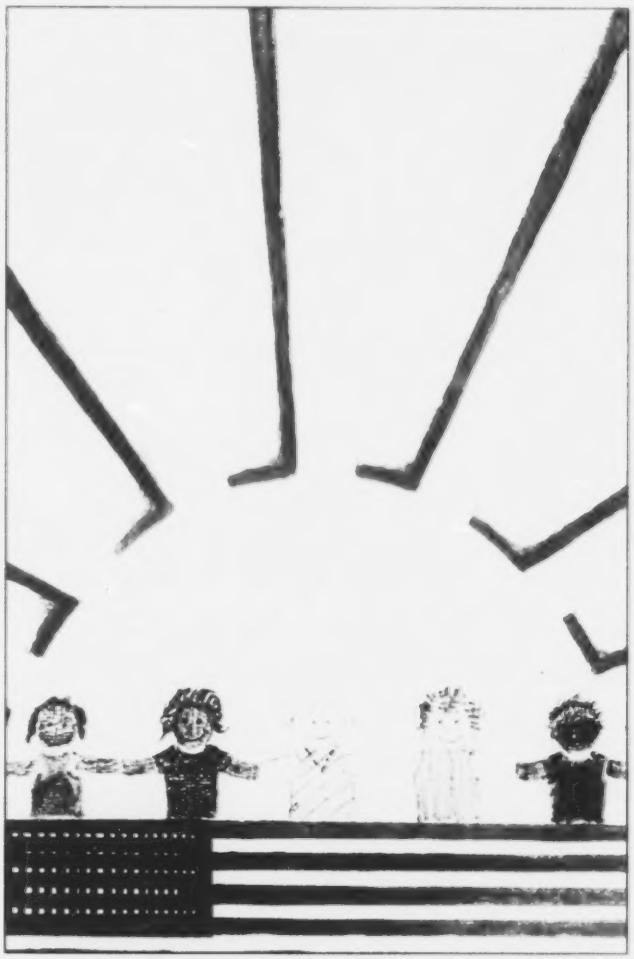
Attorney General Janet Reno swears in more than 3,000 immigrants in Maryland. SOURCE: *Prince George's County Journal,* April 1996.

WHAT CITIZENSHIP MEANS

To Ida, now that she is a citizen, she can't imagine anything else. She feels as though she were born a citizen.

When you are born in the United States, you take citizenship and freedom for granted. When you don't have it and you get it, it gives you a different status. You feel it in your heart that you are more completely a part of your country.

After being rejected by a country where we were persecuted it is very exciting to have freedom in our new country. . . . I was not very concerned about politics in Russia, because I felt that I couldn't make a difference. I take everything that happens in the United States very seriously because I feel that I can and want to make a difference. I want to be involved in decision making here, and I'm very excited that, as a new citizen, I will be able to vote for the first time in the next election.



Artwork by Alex Pervichko, age 5, immigrant from the former Soviet Union. Picture courtesy of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, 1995.

A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

Why I think that this country is the greatest is because it is a country of immigrants. Because of that everyone has a chance to be equal. In other countries if you or your parents come from somewhere else you are always an outsider. The U.S. Constitution says that all can become full citizens.

Immigrants built the United States throughout its history, like we are trying to do now. Immigrants and new citizens work very hard to learn English, to find good jobs, and to contribute to this country.

It is also very important for immigrants not to forget our home culture. Here in the U.S. you are not afraid of your culture. In the former Soviet Union you couldn't really practice your culture freely. It is a wonderful richness of the United States that American culture is one that is made up of many cultures. Our son reads and writes English very well, but we are making sure that he can also read and write Russian. It is important to remember the past and the culture we came from.

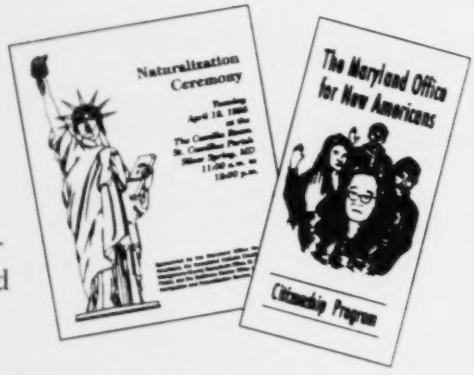
NEW CITIZEN—PRESENT AND FUTURE

Ida now works for an organization that helps new immigrants find housing and jobs and apply for citizenship. She was applauded by members of her state government's elected House of Delegates when she spoke to them in favor of a new state citizenship bill that provided resources to make it easier for new immigrants to understand how to apply for citizenship.

I am very emotionally involved with helping new immigrants settle, because I remember how difficult it was for me coming to a new country. No matter how much you want to be here, adjusting to a new culture is still difficult.

Ida, who was a civil engineer in the former Soviet Union, now also has a real estate license, and plans to go to college for an advanced degree, possibly in the computer field. She wants to continue to work with people, especially new immigrants, and to be involved fully in American life. Her desire is to make a positive difference for herself, her family, her community, and her new country.

BECOMING A CITIZEN



DIRECTIONS

Read the interview with Ida Milner about becoming a U.S. citizen. Discuss the following questions and complete at least one of the activities noted below.

1. Find out from your local or state government how immigrants can become U.S. citizens. Identify what rights citizens have compared with individuals who are not citizens.

2. Imagine that you are in charge of deciding what immigrants would have to do to become citizens. What requirements would you set for citizenship? List these and discuss them with other members of your class. Come to an agreement about your requirements and make a class list.

3. Find out what rights and responsibilities citizens have in another country. Do male and female citizens have different rights?

4. Interview a woman in your community who has recently become a citizen. Invite her to your class to share her experiences.

5. Attend a ceremony in your community where individuals become citizens. Write or draw your feelings about the ceremony.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is the United States called a "country of immigrants"?

2. What is so special about the United States that so many people want to come here from other countries?

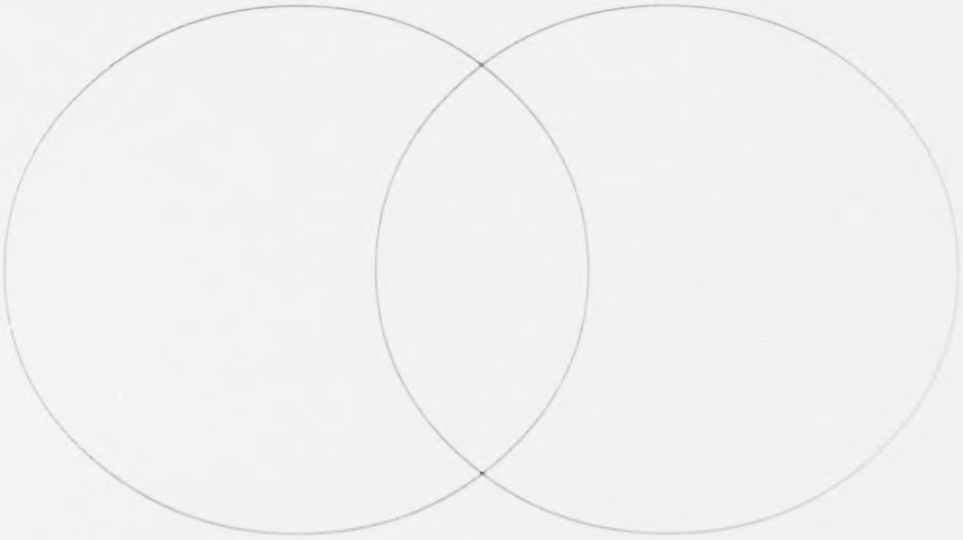
3. What do immigrants contribute to America?

ALIKE AND DIFFERENT

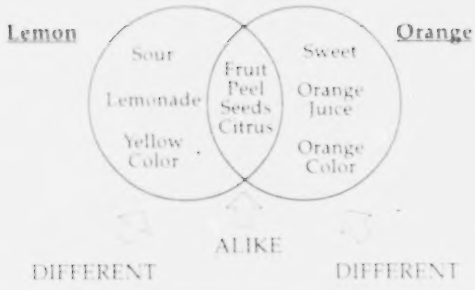
DIRECTIONS

Select two of the women immigrants you read about in this unit. Based on the information you learn, complete the "VENN" diagram below. In the outer part of the large circle, write information about each woman's life that is different from the other woman's experience. In the middle section where both circles meet, write information about the ways their experiences are alike or about things they share in common.

Name:_____ Name:_____



EXAMPLE:



CONNECTIONS

DIRECTIONS

On the K W L response page at the beginning of this section, fill in the What I Learned column. Share what you learned with a partner or a small group. With a partner or a small group, complete the following activities.

1. Choose one of the immigrant women profiled in this unit. Write a letter to her, including at least two of the following items:
   - What you learned about her experiences
   - What you learned about being an immigrant
   - How her experiences relate to your own or to someone you know
   - How you feel about her experiences
   - What else you'd like to know about her or her experiences
2. Share your letter with the whole class.

Date _____

Dear _____:

Sincerely,

Signed _____

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW: IMMIGRANT WOMEN

DIRECTIONS

Interview a woman who came to the United States from another country. Use these questions as a guide.

Interviewee's Name _____ Age-_____

Country of Origin _____

1. When did you come to the United States? How old were you? Where did you settle? Did you come with family members or alone?

2. Why did you leave your native country? Describe what life was like for you at the time you left.

3. Describe your journey to the United States and your feelings about leaving your native land.

4. What were some of your earliest impressions of the United States? What did you expect the United States to be like? What things surprised or disappointed you?

5. What were the biggest challenges you faced when you first came to the United States?

6. What or who gave you support in starting your life in a new culture?

7. Were you ever treated differently or unfairly in the United States because of your ethnic background, language, sex, etc.? How did you handle any barriers or discrimination?

8. In what ways has life been different for you since you immigrated? What aspects of your native culture and traditions have you maintained? What do you miss about your native country?

9. As a female, how have your immigrant experiences been different from those of males who immigrated from your native country?

10. What are some similarities and differences about roles of women in the United States and in your native land?

11. What women have been influential in your life?

12. Describe your work and education experiences.

13. What special interests do you have?

14. If you have become a U.S. citizen, describe your thoughts and feelings about the citizenship process.

15. What are your plans for the future?

16. What advice would you give to new immigrants? What advice would you give to students whose classmates and neighbors are new immigrants?

ORAL HISTORY: INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

DIRECTIONS

1. Make a date in advance with the woman you want to interview.

2. Allow at least thirty minutes for the interview.

3. Ask only one question at a time. Avoid questions that lead to yes-or-no answers. If you do get yes-or-no answers, then ask for an explanation. "Could you explain a little more please?" or "Why did you feel that way?"

4. Be patient. Remember, many people have never been interviewed. It is an unusual experience. A person must have time to think about her answer. If you act as if you are in a hurry, the other person doesn't feel that her answers are important to you.

5. Take careful notes during the interview.

6. Be sure to thank the person when you have finished the interview.

SELECTED STUDENT RESOURCES

BOOKS

How Many Days to America?, Eve Bunting, Clarion Press, New York, NY, 1988. The story of one refugee family's hazardous journey to the United States.

The New Americans, Changing Patterns in U.S. Immigration, Brent Ashabranner, Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, NY, 1983. Background information on recent U.S. immigrants from different areas of the world; focuses on case histories of immigrant families.

New Kids in Town: Oral Histories of Immigrant Teens, Janet Bode, Scholastic, Inc., New York, NY, 1989. Interviews with teenagers about their immigration experiences and adjustment to life in the United States.

Immigrant Women

- **Latino Women**

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

INTRODUCTION: LATINO IMMIGRATION

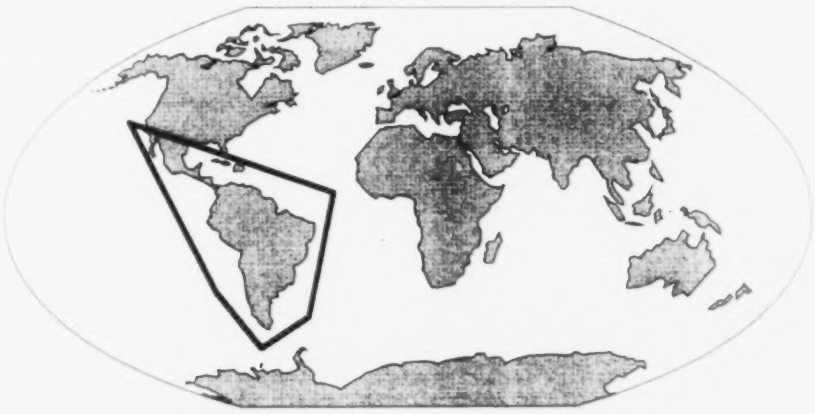
We want to change people's lives . . .
Walk the streets with us into history.

—Dolores Huerta
Mexican American Union Organizer

OVERVIEW

Latino women in the United States represent different countries of origin, cultures, socioeconomic levels, and lifestyles. They share some common traits, including the Spanish language and cultural traditions. They also share common issues and challenges; they are all women struggling to pursue better lives for themselves and their families in a new foreign land.

In this unit you will learn about the different Latino groups represented in this country; you will read about the experiences of individual Latino women who immigrated to the United States. You will learn about Dolores Huerta, who worked to improve the lives of immigrants and migrant workers; and finally, you will do some activities that will help you learn more about the Latino immigrant experience.



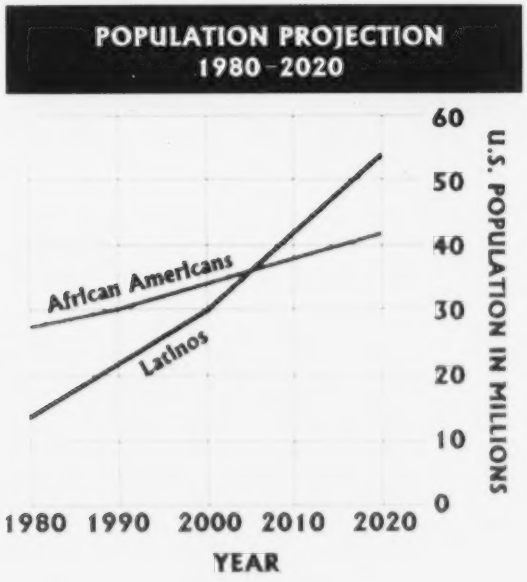
LATINO PRESENCE IN THE UNITED STATES

Latinos have been part of American history since long before the *Mayflower* brought the Pilgrims to New England. Many Latinos are the descendants of settlers born in the Southwest, when it was part of the Spanish colonies.

A broad definition of Latinos includes all Spanish-speaking people living in the United States. They could be new immigrants and/or descendants of Latinos who have lived in this country for many years. During the last decades, the number of Latinos in this country has increased significantly. According to the 1990 census, from 1980 to 1990 the Latino population rose by 53 percent.

Today, Latinos are one of the fastest-growing populations of the United States. Population projections estimate that by the year 2050, Latinos will be the largest minority ethnic group in this country. Table 1 summarizes population information.

Table 1



SOURCE: *Time*, July 19, 1991

DIFFERENT COUNTRIES, DIFFERENT VOICES

Latinos (men) and Latinas (women) in the United States have diverse backgrounds. Their countries of origin include almost all Latin countries in North, Central, and South America. However, the largest groups represented in the United States include Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans. In the last decades a large number of Dominican Republicans, Salvadorans, Nicaraguans, Guatemalans, and Colombians have also migrated to the United States. Table 2 shows the representation of these and other groups.

Table 2

Immigrant Admission by Country of Birth of Selected Latin American Countries: 1980–1989

North America	
Mexico	692,135
Central America	
El Salvador	96,209
Guatemala	45,993
Honduras	37,535
Nicaragua	29,938
Panama	28,852
Caribbean	
Cuba	163,583
Dominican Republic	225,752
South America	
Argentina	22,003
Brazil	20,882
Colombia	106,900
Ecuador	47,172
Peru	50,260
Venezuela	15,589

SOURCE: *1995 Legal Immigration Report to Congress*, U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform, 1995.

MEXICAN AMERICANS

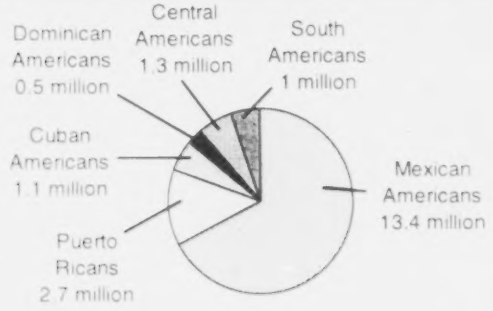
About one-third of today's Mexican Americans in the United States are descendants of the Mexican colonists in the Southwest. Their ancestors never migrated. The Southwest was their home before the United States won that part of its territory from Mexico.

The other two-thirds of Mexican Americans migrated to this country at different points in history. Mexicans primarily migrated and continue to migrate to this country to improve their economic situation. In doing so, sometimes Mexicans responded to the need for Mexican labor in the United States. Other times, they responded to the lack of working opportunities in Mexico or moved in search of better opportunities.

Today, thousands of Mexicans continue to migrate to the United States. Compared to all countries in Latin America, Mexico continues to be the source of the largest number of immigrants. Table 3 summarizes this information.

Table 3

LATINOS BY ETHNIC GROUP


Dominican Americans 0.5 million
Central Americans 1.3 million
South Americans 1 million
Cuban Americans 1.1 million
Mexican Americans 13.4 million
Puerto Ricans 2.7 million

PUERTO RICANS

Puerto Rico has a unique relationship with the United States. It was ceded to the United States by Spain in 1898. An act of Congress in 1917 made all Puerto Ricans U.S. citizens.

As U.S. citizens, Puerto Ricans can move freely between the island of Puerto Rico and the U.S. mainland. Today, Puerto Ricans are the second largest group of Latinos living in the United States.

Puerto Ricans "move" to the United States in search of better job opportunities and/or to pursue a better education. While some Puerto Ricans are successful professionals, politicians, and business persons, others are still trying to break the cycle of poverty.

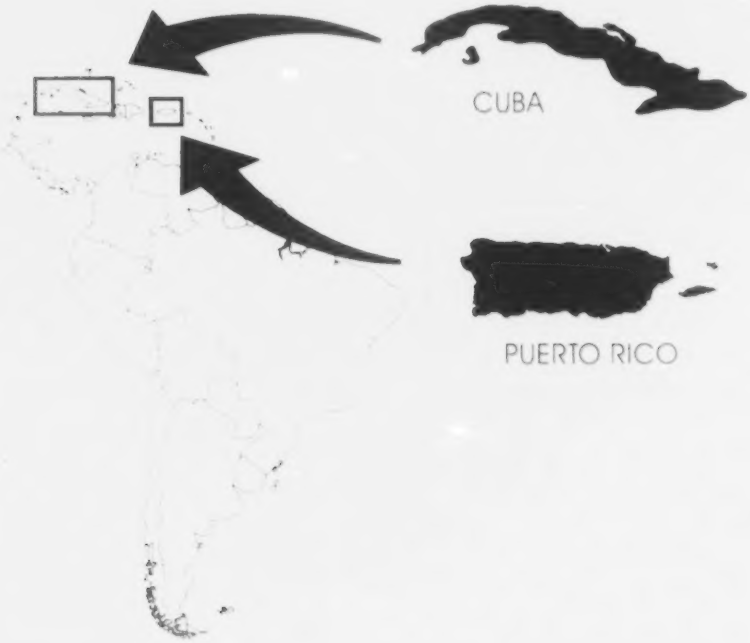
SOURCE: United States Bureau of the Census, 1990.

CUBANS

Cuban Americans are the third largest group of Latinos in the United States. The first generation of Cuban Americans migrated to this country as a result of political disagreement and opposition to Fidel Castro's Communist government.

The backgrounds and experiences of Cuban Americans are very diverse. Their jobs range from wealthy business owners to factory workers. When compared to other Latino groups, they have the highest education and economic levels.

Even though the largest Cuban emigrations took place in 1959 and 1980, today there is still a slow but steady stream of migration. During the 1980s, Cubans had the third largest number of immigrants to the United States when compared with the rest of Latin American countries.



OTHER IMMIGRANTS FROM THE CARIBBEAN, CENTRAL, AND SOUTH AMERICA

At different times, waves of immigrants have arrived from various countries in the Caribbean, Central, and South America. People from diverse countries in these regions have many reasons to migrate. However, some of the common factors found include political unrest and search for better economic opportunities.

Immigrants from South America are not by any account as numerous as those from the Caribbean and Central America. During the last twenty years many people from Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua have migrated to the United States. Civil wars, right-wing violence, "death squads," and lack of political and economic stability have resulted in thousands of people leaving their countries.

MIGRANT LATINO WOMEN

Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican, Salvadoran, Nicaraguan, Guatemalan, Colombian, Dominican, Honduran, Panamanian, Peruvian, Ecuadoran, Bolivian, Venezuelan, Uruguayan, and Argentinean women have migrated to this country. They came for different reasons and they represent different socioeconomic, educational, religious, and racial backgrounds.

Many of these women came with their families, others left their children at home with *abuelita* (grandmother) and came searching for better lives. Many witnessed violence and managed to escape war, others escaped poverty. Some of them are married, others are heads of households, some of them came legally, others faced enormous obstacles and dangers and entered illegally. Some of them face a lot of hardships in this new country, including low pay and discrimination, others are successful professionals. Some found new territories to discover and explore, others live in constant fear of being discovered and deported.

The following interviews and profiles describe the experiences of four women. Three of them are women who left their country when they were very young, the third is a Mexican American woman who had the courage and the strength to fight for one of the poorest and least protected groups of people in America, the migrant field-workers.

SOURCE: *Moving the Mountain: Women Working for Social Change*, Ellen Cantarow, The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, NY, 1980.

LATINOS AND JOBS

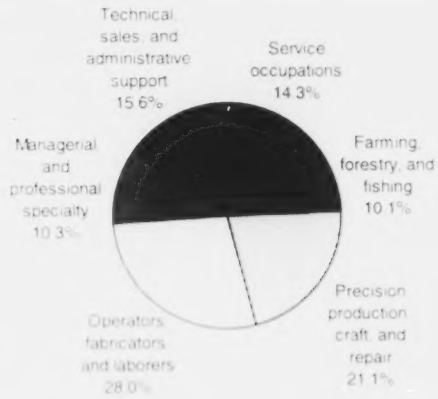
DIRECTIONS

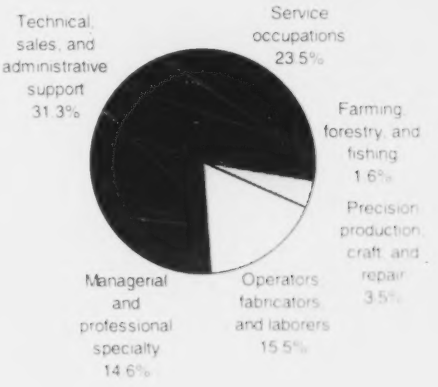
The following table highlights the different type of jobs that Latinos and Latinas have today. Make a list of the job categories by gender (male or female) and rank them. Where do women tend to have the highest and the lowest representation? Compare and discuss the results with a partner or in a small group.

Table 4

LATINOS AND LATINAS IN THE LABOR FORCE

LATINOS (Males)


Technical, sales, and administrative support 15.6%
Service occupations 14.3%
Managerial and professional specialty 10.3%
Farming, forestry, and fishing 10.1%
Precision production, craft, and repair 21.1%
Operators, fabricators, and laborers 28.0%


Technical, sales, and administrative support 31.3%
Service occupations 23.5%
Farming, forestry, and fishing 1.6%
Precision production, craft, and repair 3.5%
Managerial and professional specialty 14.6%
Operators, fabricators, and laborers 15.5%

LATINAS (Females)

STUDENT ACTIVITY

SOURCE: Current Population Reports, *The Hispanic Population of the United States*, 1990

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

MEMORIES OF A MIGRANT WOMAN: SOCORRO HERRERA

I know that for every time someone said I could not, my response was, "let me show you how it is done."

Socorro Herrera grew up as a migrant child in the Southwest. When she was three years old, her family left their home in Mexico and came to the United States in search of better working opportunities. Her memories describe the experiences and feelings of a migrant family who moved throughout different states to work in the fields. These are some of the memories and thoughts that she shared in an interview.

ARRIVAL IN THE UNITED STATES

My family first came to the United States in about 1965; I was three years old. We settled in Carlsbad, New Mexico, because this is where some of my father's family were already working. My father had already been in the U.S. for several years, he had been working under a program called the bracero *program. This program allowed people from Mexico the opportunity to work in the U.S. legally, without being permanent citizens.*

REASONS FOR LEAVING MEXICO— THE JOURNEY TO A NEW COUNTRY

My father had been working in the United States mostly for financial reasons. After he became a resident alien, he thought it would be best for the whole family to live here. So he arranged to have us join him.

There is very little I remember about my first journey to the U.S. I do know that there was lots of tension and uncertainty that everything would turn out the way it was planned. I remember my mother telling us that although life in Mexico was very difficult, and she wanted all of us to be together, she was also very sad to leave her family and very much afraid of coming to a new place. She worried that since she did not speak English, nor did she drive, that someday she might be stranded and not know where to get help.

EARLY MEMORIES AS A MIGRANT CHILD

I don't remember much about my first years as a migrant child, other than playing in the cotton fields and waiting for endless hours in the hot sun for my parents to finish working. Even at four years old I felt like a real contributor having the privilege of carrying water to everyone who was working. I felt like I had a job that was very important.

Life was difficult as a young migrant child. You take everything in and go with the flow. My family is very close and that lent a very strong support to the transition. We were forever living with other relatives or they were living with us, so there was always many cousins to talk and play with.

FIRST CHALLENGES

The biggest challenge I faced as I got older was not speaking English. This was a problem for me and my family, we always had to rely on interpreters or friends who could speak English to interpret when we were enrolling in school, trying to get paid, cashing a check, etc. What made this very difficult was that people were usually very rude to us as if we were not worth speaking to. I guess from an early age I felt kind of inadequate about something. I just couldn't quite pinpoint it. And soon as we left that environment I again found myself in a very safe place, a place where people valued each other, a safe place full of love and safety.

LIFE AT SCHOOL

School was difficult because I did not speak English. We moved around quite a bit until I was in junior high, so I never knew just what to expect. For the most part, I was very welcome and had very sensitive teachers who somehow could relate to my lifestyle. Most of the time I was surrounded by other students whose family did the same things my parents did—so we were all one happy group. However, there were times when I was in schools where I was one of the few that did not speak English, one of the ones that did not dress like everyone else, and most embarrassing of all (at that time) was bringing lunches to school that were somewhat different than everyone else's. That or the fact that my lunch ticket indicated a "free lunch" somehow made me feel like I did not belong.

Just like there were teachers who embarrassed me because of the unique characteristics that I brought with me to school, there were those who just did not like me for those same reasons. Take for example when I was in the second grade, my teacher felt that because I was not able to communicate in the language the class used, my place was out in the hall for most of the day.

Along with me sat an African American student. We did not have much to say to each other since I could not speak English. We just merely glanced at each other every once in a while. Recess could also be a very uncomfortable time. I remember that same year sitting on the porch watching everyone play and hoping the day would end soon.

For those few teachers and other educators who were rude and insensitive to where I was from, there were those who instilled in me the spirit of a fighter. They constantly, in a language that was no different from those other teachers, communicated to me that I was unique, had much to contribute, and had a whole world to explore. They went the extra mile to visit my home and through nonverbal communication shared with my family the many things I was doing in school, which greatly enhanced my life at home.

LIFE AT HOME

Life at home was full of love, warmth and acceptance. My mother will always be like a saint who was always there to provide the support we needed. My father, having had a very traditional upbringing, was very authoritarian and made most of the rules. He believed in the old traditions of Mexico. Girls' roles were very well spelled out. No dating, going out with friends, short skirts or shorts, etc. He had so many rules that the contrast between what others did and what my family did became evident early on. The more I learned about the differences the more I felt I had to compromise in order to be successful. My father was/is very much an advocate of education. He was always saying to us: "No one can take your education from you, and when you die you take it with you." However, he also felt that doing well in school was the responsibility of the teacher and yourself. My father or mother would never have thought of interfering with the school. He would always say: "If you get in trouble at school, you will be in twice that amount of trouble at home."

"The Girl and the Ox," by Heloisa H. Tigre. SOURCE: *Responsabilidades Legales de los Organismos Educativos Que Prestan Servicios a Estudiantes Que Pertenecen a Minorias Linguisticas,* The Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium, Inc., Chevy Chase, MD, 1995.

SUPPORT FOR ADJUSTING TO A NEW CULTURE

The support for adjusting to this new environment came mostly from my family. Whatever happened at school or out in society was always soothed by the fact that having a family like mine was so much fun. We always laughed no matter what the situation, you always knew someone cared. If we ever had to spend the night in the car during our travels to new job sites, my father and mother would always tell stories about La Llorona, or something that happened in Mexico when we were very young. They kept us entertained and assured us that tomorrow we would be where we needed to be and this was only a temporary situation.

Teachers and other educators who had the cultural sensitivity to understand my needs were also very supportive in my understanding a new way of life. Those who truly understood made sure to encourage my sharing of who I was and the importance of my differences to making a difference in our classroom learning.

DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination and prejudice permeate everything and everyone in this country. I guess until recently I have many vivid memories of being treated differently. From being ignored in the office while waiting to register for school to grocery store clerks making snide remarks about how dirty we were when we would stop to buy groceries for the next day of work. I guess I can say that in many ways I learned to ignore all the negative influences surrounding growing up poor and being a non-English speaker. By the time I was in high school, there were only a few times that something happened that brought about those feelings of inadequacy that were so ever present in elementary school and junior high. I know that I changed quite a bit, I tried very hard to dress like everyone else, speak like everyone else, and I especially worked hard at not letting anyone know where I lived or what my family was really like. So I guess that in attempting to become accepted, I in many ways rejected who I was.

KEEPING TRADITIONS ALIVE

At home we have maintained many of the traditions from Mexico. We celebrate most of the holidays, eat many of the same foods, and still maintain those close family ties. My mother laments the fact that her children have not remained nearby and that some of her grandchildren do not speak Spanish, but that is part of the change that occurs when you become part of another culture. In the United States there are some things that you are encouraged to give up in order to survive (or as some would tell you, "become successful"). My brother's children are only second generation in this country and already a different attitude exists about what it means to be an immigrant. We must all write to remember, because we should never forget.

GROWING UP BILINGUAL AND BICULTURAL

There are definitely advantages to being a bilingual/bicultural woman. I believe we are stronger and more willing to be challenged. We strive to overcome the myths and misconceptions that are placed on Latino women. I know that for every time someone said I could not, my response was, "let me show you how it is done." Being bilingual is perhaps my greatest asset. I have been very fortunate to work

Traditional Mexican costumes during a Santa Fe, New Mexico, fiesta. SOURCE: *The Mexican Americans,* Julie Catalano, Chelsea House Publishers, New York, NY, 1988.

with people who are non-English speakers since I was in high school. Through community work, visiting schools, doing lectures, presentations and many other activities I received more personal satisfaction than almost anything else I've done. Plus it has not hurt that more than once it has placed me at the top for job opportunities. I'm very proud to be both bicultural and bilingual.

LEARNING FROM OTHER WOMEN

My mother was very influential in my life. Although she never learned English or to drive, and has only a third-grade education, she was the strong binding force that kept us all together. Although my father thought he ran the show, she was the one that was in charge. She is an extremely talented and courageous woman.

Along with my mother, there are many women who have lent me the support I needed while pursuing my dreams. Teachers who believed that despite my fragmented school attendance, I had something to offer. Also, during my college years I met some of the most talented, intelligent, motivated Latino women, who served as my mentors, friends, and much, much more.

SPECIAL NOTE

Socorro took advantage of her unique experiences. Not only did she complete college, she also earned a doctorate in education. Socorro now works as the national origin coordinator of the Kansas Desegregation Assistance Center. As such, she provides assistance to schools to help them in their efforts to provide students from diverse language and cultural backgrounds (just like her!) with challenging and culturally sensitive education. Socorro lives in Kansas with her husband and her two children.

MEMORIES OF A MIGRANT WOMAN

DIRECTIONS

1. After reading the memories of Socorro Herrera, discuss the following questions with a partner or in a small group.

   - How old was Socorro when she first came to the United States? Why did her family leave Mexico?
   - What did Socorro remember about her life as a migrant child? Do you think she had an easy life? Was it difficult? Why?
   - What was Socorro's greatest challenge when she first arrived in the United States?
   - Was Socorro happy in school? Explain why she was happy and/or unhappy?
   - How was life at home for Socorro? Were her parents supportive of her? Explain.
   - Socorro was discriminated against because she was (circle all you think apply)
     a. a girl/woman
     b. Latino
     c. poor
     d. migrant

     Explain your answer.
   - Is Socorro happy to be bilingual and bicultural? Explain why.

2. Write two questions that you would like to ask Socorro about her experience.

(1)

(2)

3. List the two most important facts, thoughts, and/or feelings that Socorro's memories provided you with.

(1)

(2)

DOLORES HUERTA

I believe that things happen for a reason and that we are put in this life to make things happen. We're supposed to be working for change. What else is there to do? We're only given a few years to live on this earth, so we should do something besides feeding our face and acquiring a lot of material riches; we are here to improve life on this planet. The only decision we have to make is, "What am I going to do with my life and how can I make the world better for other people?" It's a gift and a blessing to be alive. Each of us is given certain gifts, and we have to use those gifts to help others.

Dolores Huerta, a community and union leader, is a living example of a woman who has devoted her life to helping others. Dolores was important in organizing the United Farm Workers Union in California. Together with César Chávez, she helped improve the lives of thousands of farmworkers and their families. Her ancestors were Mexican immigrants, and she worked to help other Mexican American immigrants and migrant workers.

Dolores Fernandez was born in the mining town of Dawson, New Mexico, on April 10, 1930. The 1930s were a very hard period for most Americans. Due to national economic hardships, millions of Americans were out of work and many families were homeless and forced to live with just the minimum.

Dolores's father worked as a miner and a farmworker. Like many other Mexican American farmworkers, he worked very hard but was paid very little. He constantly had to travel to secure farmwork. When Dolores was a small girl, she and her family had to follow her father to Colorado, Nebraska, and Wyoming. Because these farmworkers travel so much to work, they are called migrant workers.

Photo © Bette Lane.

Dolores's parents divorced in 1936. She moved with her mother and brothers to a poor neighborhood in Stockton, California, where people from different races and countries lived together. Alicia Fernandez, Dolores's mother, taught her to respect everybody no matter what language they spoke, what race they represented, or what religion they practiced. Dolores also learned from her mother that a woman can be as successful as a man if she puts her mind and effort into it. Dolores's mother ran a successful hotel and restaurant business.

Dolores did not experience racism as a young child. It was during high school that she first encountered prejudice and discrimination. Dolores was a good student in school; however, her high level of achievement was not trusted. She remembers that in one of her classes she got all A's, but at the end of the school year, her teacher gave her a C. Dolores said, "The teacher told me at the end of the year that she couldn't give me an A because she knew that somebody was writing my papers for me."

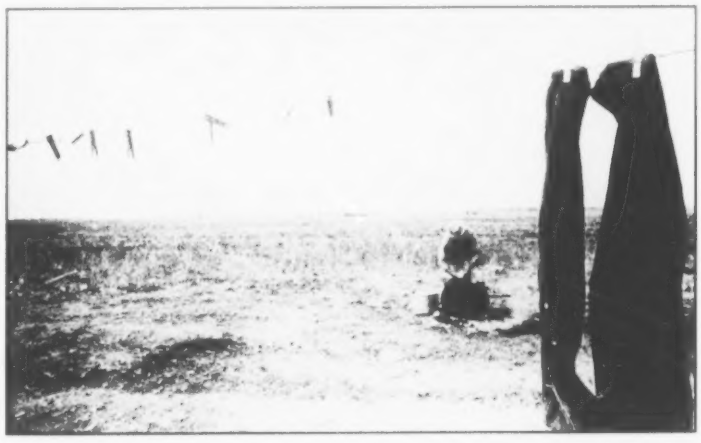
After completing high school, Dolores enrolled at Stockton College, but marriage and the birth of two daughters interrupted her studies. After a few years, the marriage ended and Dolores returned to college to earn a degree. During those years, Dolores had many different jobs. Finally, she decided to

work as a teacher. Her students came from poor, farmworking families. She soon realized that these children needed more than schooling. She felt that "as a teacher I couldn't do anything for the kids who came to school barefoot and hungry."

Dolores married again, to community activist Ventura Huerta, and became an organizer for the Community Service Organization (CSO), where César Chávez also worked. Her work at CSO and her close working relationship with Chávez affected Dolores's future life and commitment to the farmworkers struggle for justice.

CSO was created to help Mexican American farmworkers build better lives for themselves. The farmworkers had a hard life. They received very little money for their hard work. Most of them lived in tents or shacks with dirt floors and no running water. Children had to miss school to help their families in the fields.

In 1962, Dolores left CSO to join César Chávez in Delano, California. Together, they worked to develop a farmworkers' union. By then, she was pregnant with her seventh child. Like many women, she tried to keep up her many responsibilities and accomplish her roles as a paid worker, mother, community activist, and spouse. Many times, she felt overwhelmed and guilty: "I had serious doubts whether I was doing the right thing, giving kids a lousy supper to go to a council meeting." Nevertheless, she continued to work for the cause of farmworkers.



Farmworker doing her family's laundry. SOURCE: *Moving the Mountain: Women Working for Social Change*, Ellen Cantarow, The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1980; courtesy of George Ballis, National Land for People.

Dolores's second marriage ended in divorce. Those were hard years for her and her family. Dolores had to raise her children as a single parent. Although she was elected the vice president of the National Farm Workers Association, (NFWA), she barely made enough money to support her family.

We were extremely poor, so poor that our clothes came from donations and secondhand clothing stores—in fact, secondhand were a luxury for us! In the union, I worked for five dollars a week at first, and later ten dollars a week and food stamps, then, eventually, we received a subsidy for food. The problem was that I was out of town so often I could never pick up the food stamps from the office!

Fortunately, her mother and the union came through for her. When Dolores traveled through northern and central California recruiting farmers for the union, Dolores's mother, César and his wife, as well as other members of the union, looked after the children.

By 1964, Dolores and César's hard work paid off. The NFWA had signed up almost a thousand farmworker families. In May 1965, the NFWA had their first successful strike. A nursery owner was paying his workers less than he had initially promised. César and Dolores organized the workers, who did not go to work until they were paid what was agreed upon—and they won.

This victory was just the beginning of a long struggle. That same year, a group of grape pickers went on strike against a California vineyard. They asked the NFWA to join them. After a democratic vote, the members of NFWA decided to participate. Under "Viva la Causa," which means "Long live the cause," thousands of farmworkers under the leadership of César and Dolores organized a boycott against grape growers in California.

César Chávez during the 300-mile march from Delano to Sacramento, spring 1966. SOURCE: *Moving the Mountain: Women Working for Social Change*, Ellen Cantarow, The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1980; courtesy of George Ballis, National Land for People.

César, Dolores, and members of the union had to work very hard to ensure that the boycott had the impact they expected. To be successful, they had to convince people throughout the country not to buy grapes from California. They traveled all over to inform people of the unfair conditions that farmworkers had to face as grape pickers. After months of hard work, the entire country was aware of the farmworkers' struggle. People stopped buying grapes. In 1966, Dolores and César organized a 300-mile march from Delano, California, to the state capitol building in Sacramento. Finally, their hard work paid off—one of the growers agreed to talk to the union!

Dolores was selected to negotiate a contract with the grower because of her splendid personal skills. She was firm and tough when it came to defending the rights of the farmworkers, and was able to negotiate reasonable agreements. César Chávez said about her: "She is physically, spiritually, and psychologically fearless . . . absolutely." The new contract that Dolores negotiated raised the minimum wage of union farmworkers. It also allowed them to earn paid holidays and vacations and collect unemployment insurance.

Although the boycott was very successful, many other growers still refused to comply with the rights of farmworkers. The "lucha," which means "the fight," needed to continue. Dolores went to New York to continue the boycott from there. She ended up being separated from members of her family for almost two years. Part of her family moved to New York, while others stayed in California. She made hundreds of speeches and recruited many supporters. Dolores was so successful that she obtained support from the NewYork City government, which agreed to support the boycott and not buy California grapes.

A United Farm Workers march. SOURCE: *Moving the Mountain: Women Working for Social Change*, Ellen Cantarow, The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1980; courtesy of George Ballis, National Land for People.

The long struggle ended when César Chávez, who was a strong believer in nonviolent protest, went on a hunger strike to earn support for La Causa (the Cause). By 1970, most of the vineyards were paying fair wages. The union had won a very significant victory. Dolores finally was able to go back home and stay with her children—her goal had been accomplished!

Dolores did not abandon the quest. Even today, she continues to work to improve the lives of the farmworkers. Dolores mobilized farmworkers and consumers to force the U.S. government to ban pesticides, such as DDT, when it was proved that these pesticides were affecting the health of farmworkers. She helped to found the union's own radio station, Radio Campesina, and she continues to provide the needed leadership to the union.

Dolores is pleased with the paths her children have chosen. Even though most of them were involved with the union at some point in their lives, they have selected different career options. As doctors, lawyers, chefs, nurses, and union members, her children have been able to pursue their own dreams.

After such a long struggle, Dolores feels that there are still things that need to be done. As a feminist, she strongly believes in the role of women in promoting positive social change. "The world is not going to get better unless women make it happen. I firmly believe that. Women have a different type of energy—they give power, they empower . . ." As for what is next on her agenda, she says:

> *Right now I'm blessed to be able to sustain my pace and continue to do what I'm doing. I'll just keep going as long as I can and die with my boots on, I hope.*

Supermarket boycott in California. SOURCE: *Moving the Mountain: Women Working for Social Change,* Ellen Cantarow, The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1980; courtesy of Jessie Lopez de la Cruz.

DOLORES HUERTA

DIRECTIONS

1. After reading the Dolores Huerta profile, discuss the following questions with a partner or in a small group.

   - Was Dolores an immigrant? Where was she born?
   - What was Dolores's childhood like? Did she stay in one place?
   - Did Dolores experience racism as a young child? If not, when did she first experience racism?
   - Do you think she experienced racism because she was a girl? Or was it because she was Latina? Do you think it was both? Explain.
   - Why did Dolores decide to help organize the migrant field-workers?
   - How did Dolores manage to take care of her children and her work at the same time? What difficulties did she face?
   - Why did César Chávez and Dolores organize a boycott against grape growers in California?
   - Discuss the following excerpt from Dolores's interview and answer the questions:

     We're only given a few years to live on this earth, so we should do something besides feeding our face and acquiring a lot of material riches; we are here to improve life on this planet. The only decision we have to make is, "What am I going to do with my life and how can I make the world better for other people?"

a) Why is it important to focus on other people and not just on yourself and your family?

b) What can you do to help other people?

2. Write two questions that you would like to ask Dolores about her experience.

(1)

(2)

3. List two of the most important facts, thoughts, and /or feelings that Dolores's profile provided you with.

(1)

(2)

ANA SOL GUTIERREZ

Ana Sol Gutierrez has excelled in achieving the many goals she was determined to achieve throughout her life. A successful computer engineer, an active education leader, and a devoted mother, she has managed to open new frontiers, "ha abierto nuevos caminos" for Latinas. Ms. Sol Gutierrez left her appointment as deputy administrator for the Department of Transportation's Research and Special Programs Administration to turn her attention to serving as president of a local board of education.

Because of her commitment to her profession, education, and public service, Ana Sol Gutierrez has received numerous honors and distinctions. She is the first elected official of Salvadoran descent in the United States. She is also the first Latino elected member and president of the Montgomery County, Maryland, Board of Education. Recently, she was one of twelve Latino women selected for their significant contribution to American quality of life by the Bread and Roses Project: *Women of Hope—Latinas Abriendo Camino*. She was awarded the 1993 Hispanic Achievement Award in Science, an award co-sponsored by *Hispanic* magazine and Apple Computer. In 1991, she was named among the "100 Most Influential Hispanics in U.S.A." by *Hispanic Business* magazine and featured in "Outstanding Women in Nontraditional Careers" in *Vista* magazine.

ARRIVAL IN THE UNITED STATES

Ana Sol Gutierrez was born in Santa Ana, El Salvador, in 1942. She first came to the United States with her family when she was four years old. When she first arrived in the United States, Ana learned the English language but continued to speak Spanish at home. As a result, she became bilingual at a very

early age. Her family was very supportive of her bilingualism and always encouraged her to speak both languages. Ana feels very positively about her early language experiences:

> *I think it provided me with the basis to be completely bilingual and bicultural and as I think back that has served me beautifully, not only for living in the U.S.A. but also for living in many other countries in Central and South America. It has provided me with a broad basis for understanding other cultures.*

Ana was one of the few Latino students in her elementary school: "I and another male student were the only Latino students." Consequently, at school she remembers being totally "submerged, absorbed by the American white majority." She felt very proud and happy to talk about El Salvador to her fellow students, and saw herself as a source of valuable information. However, the general lack of knowledge about her country annoyed her: "Every time I said I was from El Salvador, nobody knew where it was. It took a war to put El Salvador on the map!"

Her first encounters with discrimination and racism did not occur until she went to junior high school, which was around the time of the Supreme Court decision to integrate schools. She suddenly discovered a new world:

> *Until then, I was not keenly aware that there had been two segregated worlds. I remember going downtown as a child to theaters in the District and being unaware that there was a whole population (African American) missing . . .*

Ana was always attracted to challenges. She did very well in school, particularly in math. Her passion, however, was chemistry. When asked why, she responded, "because it was the only course that I had difficulty with in high school, it really was a challenge, and I remember that it was like a puzzle and it was interesting. When I finished my first chemistry course, I knew I wanted to learn more . . ."

EDUCATION AND CAREER

When it was time to go to college, Ana selected chemistry as her major, a very unusual career for a woman, particularly for a Latino woman, in those days. Her choice of career was supported by her family, particularly her father.

> *He, being a Latino man, did not think I was going to select chemistry as my career, and had suggested languages and interpretation as a career. However, he was always very supportive of my capabilities and my choices in life. He always made me believe that yes, I was capable of learning anything.*

After completing her bachelor's degree in chemistry, Ana traveled to Europe, where she met her future husband. She got married and stayed in Switzerland for three years. Upon her return to Washington, D.C., she attempted to work in chemistry, but this attempt did not prove successful. Ana started getting involved with computers. In the meantime, she was also busy raising a family of three boys.

Ana's knowledge of mathematics and computers, acquired in college, opened the doors of American business for her. Soon she was working at a management level as an information scientist. The corporate world expanded her career in many ways, and also made her more aware of the discrimination often faced by women.

You see it [discrimination] in the overt ways of the opportunities and promotions that you are seldom given, the levels of responsibilities, as well as in the much more discreet ways of interrupting you when you speak and addressing the male that is with you although he actually happens to work for you!

After a short stay in Washington, Ana and her husband, a Bolivian, traveled to several countries in South America, where her husband worked with several international governmental organizations. Those were hard years for Ana. Although she could and did enjoy teaching and working in Venezuela and Bolivia, it was hard to overcome the limiting expectations and roles that her husband's family and sometimes her husband had for her. It was also difficult to balance her role as a professional, a wife, and a mother.

I attempted to be the perfect wife, the perfect mother, so it was a continuous struggle to be able to balance the need internal to me as professional. I saw myself as a woman who had an earning ability who wanted to be a contributor to society. That did not mesh well with a second class citizenship, which is my estimation of what the traditional roles have been for women in Latin America.

Ana's marriage ended in divorce. She returned to the United States with her three sons, Fernando, Alex, and Rodrigo, and suddenly became a single parent and the sole breadwinner. After a short period, she resumed her career and started working for Wang Laboratories, Inc., in Bethesda, Maryland, as the district technical support manager.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Ana enrolled her children in the local public schools and soon became very active in the parent-teacher association (PTA). This time, she started to advocate not only for her own children but also for a new, emerging group of children from Central America. Ana explains how she became involved:

> *All of a sudden, I saw a school system that was changing. There were growing numbers of Latino children, particularly from Central America! I realized that the school system did not know what to do about it. So I began getting very much involved in the schools. I was involved in the PTA for my kids, but this was a different thing—this was a large number of parents and students that were really marginalized.*

Soon after becoming active in the PTA as an advocate for Latino children, she realized that her participation at that level was not enough.

After I saw that you could lobby, demonstrate, coax, and do as many voluntary translations and yet not accomplish much; when I noticed that nothing would really happen until you got at the table and began to change the system from inside, that's when I decided to run for the Board.

Ana ran against a very powerful opponent and won. Today she is not only a member of the Montgomery County, Maryland, Board of Education, she is the president!

Her commitment to education and public service continued with her involvement in a number of national and local organizations such the National Council of la Raza, the Spanish Education Development Center, the United Way of Montgomery County, and the Montgomery County Hispanic Alliance.

Ana also moved ahead in her professional career. She obtained a master of science degree from American University in scientific and technical information systems and completed postgraduate studies in engineering at George Washington University. In conjunction with her graduate courses, she worked for different private companies as a senior systems engineer in technology. She managed various contracts with Goddard Space Flight Center, oversaw the implementation of a major system/software development project for the advanced air traffic control system, and worked as a senior consultant on total quality management to corporate centers and programs for the National Aeronautic and Space Administration (NASA).

PRESENT AND FUTURE

Today, Ana continues to embrace new challenges in both her career and her public work. As president of the Montgomery County Board of Education, she is responsible for leading the county to address the complex educational challenges of this century. Ana is also initiating a new path. She plans to use her technical knowledge and expertise to help Latino families become involved in

using computers. She will work with the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE) in this project and is strongly committed to making sure that computers become part of Latino culture.

> *We [Latinos] have to be part of the information age. I want to make sure that Latino students become proficient in the use of computers. If we wait until technology becomes a mature set of skills within our schools, we will fall behind. We are already behind!*

After decades of successful work as a professional woman, as a public policy leader, and as a mother, Ana feels ready to cross new frontiers and to search for new challenges. Since she was a little girl, she has approached life as an exciting learning experience. "I think that it is that love of finding something new to learn that is so important to have as a lifelong habit."

181 BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ADVICE

When asked what advice she would give young Latino women, Ana said:

I will tell young women to be economically independent, because that is the thread that goes through class. If you are educated and able to have your own independent income, that can protect you from the misery and discrimination that comes from poverty, as well as the dependence that women have traditionally had to accept. I will also tell them not to let any person outside of them limit who they are. I will urge them to develop that strong sense of self that is gained by doing, getting involved, and exposing yourself to as many experiences. Finally, I will tell them, "Be unafraid, try new things! Be anything you want to be!"

ANA SOL GUTIERREZ

DIRECTIONS

1. After reading Ana Sol Gutierrez's profile, discuss the following questions with a partner or in a small group.

   - Where was Ana born? Why did she first come to the United States?
   - Why does Ana feel so good about becoming bilingual at an early age?
   - How did Ana feel when her classmates did not know about her country of origin? Do you think it is important to learn and to know about the different countries and regions your classmates come from? Why?
   - When did Ana first encounter discrimination? Explain.
   - Why did Ana select chemistry as her major? Did her family support her?
   - Did Ana face discrimination at work? Explain.
   - What challenges and problems did Ana face while she was attempting to fulfill her roles as mother, wife, and professional?
   - Why did Ana become actively involved in the Montgomery County Parent-Teacher Association?
   - Discuss Ana's following piece of advice to young Latino women:

     I will also tell them (girls) not to let any person outside of them limit who they are. I will urge them to develop that strong sense of self that is gained by doing, getting involved, exposing yourself to as many experiences. Finally, I will tell them, "Be unafraid, try new things! Be anything you want to be!"

     - Why do you think she is giving this advice to Latino girls?

STUDENT ACTIVITY

- Do you think this is a good piece of advice only for Latino girls? Justify your answer.

- What would you like to do in the future? What challenges do you think you are going to face? How do you think you can counteract them?

2. Write two questions that you would like to ask Ana about her experience.

   (1)

   (2)

3. List two of the most important facts, thoughts, and/or feelings that Ana's profile provided you with.

   (1)

   (2)

CARMEN DELGADO VOTAW

Born in Humacao, Puerto Rico, in 1935, Carmen Delgado Votaw came to the United States in 1962. She is director of government relations for the 3.2 million-member Girl Scouts of the USA and an active leader for women's rights and human rights. Her leadership positions have included serving as president of the InterAmerican Commission of Women of the Organization of American States, co-chair of the National Advisory Committee on Women, and president of the National Conference of Puerto Rican Women. Carmen authored the book *Puerto Rican Women: Some Biographical Profiles*, and has visited well over sixty countries to speak on human and civil rights and women's issues. She has participated in the four United Nations World Conferences on Women, was inducted into the Maryland Hall of Fame, and has received numerous honors, including the 1996 National Hispanic Heritage Award. Here is Ms. Votaw's story in her own words.

ARRIVAL IN THE MAINLAND UNITED STATES

I came to the United States in 1962 when I was twenty-seven years old with my mother, Candida Paz, my husband, Gregory B. Votaw, and my four-month old son, Stephen. I left Puerto Rico in 1960 when I married a man from Pennsylvania and we moved to Iran where he had a job for two years. When I left Puerto Rico, I knew nothing about Iran and I did not know what kind of life I would lead, but it was an enriching experience, which confirmed in me the universality of all human beings. I learned a lot about Muslim customs, the Persian language and art, and Iranian law. My oldest son, Stephen, was born in Iran. After two years, we moved to Washington, D.C.

LIFE IN PUERTO RICO

For me, life growing up in Puerto Rico was very interesting. I lived in a small house in a development on the outskirts of San Juan, the capital city, near the beach. And although our resources were limited, my widowed mother and I had been able to buy a house, very small but dignified. I had graduated with honors in junior high and high school, and magna cum laude from the University of Puerto Rico. So I had been looking forward to a career in the Government Development Bank.

CHALLENGES IN THE UNITED STATES

In the U.S., my challenge was to find ways in which I could continue to develop my intellectual concerns while my three children (Steve, Michael, and Lisa) grew up. I did that by getting involved in the board of a preschool where we had Black inner-city kids and white kids come together to the school swimming pool in the days when segregation of schools by race was still common.

My early impressions of the U.S. were positive. And, of course, we became involved with the international community. But racial segregation was pervasive, and I had the privilege of participating in the "I Have a Dream" Martin Luther King March on Washington in 1963, which seared in me the commitment to fight discrimination wherever it appears. It was definitely surprising and disappointing to me to learn that race discrimination was so common in the U.S. The Hispanic community was not very large then, and language limitations kept Hispanics from making progress in finding jobs that paid high wages.

The biggest challenge I faced was keeping my culture and Hispanic identity. People tried to ignore or change my name. My mother came to live with us and her English was poor. Driving around was confusing. Helping the Hispanic community became a goal. My husband and my mother supported my volunteer activities, which included tutoring Hispanic and Black children in elementary schools. I found great groups of dedicated women in volunteer activities. I did volunteer work for the Overseas Education Fund of the League of Women Voters and began to do English-Spanish translations of publications, writing a newsletter (Intercambio) *and helping with training programs for women in Latin America. Eventually, I traveled all over Latin America and also began to travel in Asia and Africa.*

I did not personally encounter any overt discrimination in the U.S., but could tell when some people asked me in a particular way where I came from that they were trying to determine my race. Being involved with the international community was great and I made many good friends from all over the world. Wage discrimination was the major hurdle I found. When I worked for a member of the U.S. Congress House of Representatives, I was one of a few women chiefs of staff and, in comparison to male staff members, very poorly paid.

Some of the males that came from Puerto Rico to New York found great obstacles if they sought employment in the garment and service industries. Those that came to the East Coast to do agricultural work faced enormous economic and discriminatory practices. And even though the government of Puerto Rico established a Migration Office in New York, limited English skills and inadequate schooling has still kept both males and females of the Puerto Rican community in the United States at the very low rung of the economic ladder.

CULTURE AND HERITAGE

Many opportunities have opened up for me since living in the U.S. for thirty-three years. But I have always kept nurturing my Puerto Rican roots through preparation of our typical foods (rice and beans or chickpeas or pigeonpeas), the traditional "pernil" (roasted pork) and "tostones" (fried plantains), as well as "arroz con dulce" (rice pudding), and celebrating Christmas and Three Kings Day, the traditional holiday celebrations. I have also kept my Spanish language, enjoyed our music and arts, and have written biographies in English and Spanish that will let people know of our outstanding Hispanic women.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND INFLUENCE

In Puerto Rico, we have a strong Spanish tradition. Puerto Rico was colonized by Spain and was ceded to the United States during the Spanish-American War. Women have overcome obstacles and gained many rights. The 1952 Constitution of the Commonwealth contains an equal rights clause. So we are ahead of the U.S. Constitution in guaranteeing women's rights.

Women in Puerto Rico have participated actively in the political process. And we had a female Supreme Court justice years before the U.S. did. We have had mayors, heads of political parties, and other outstanding women in all fields. However, no woman has been elected governor yet. The first Puerto Rican woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives comes from my hometown of Yabucoa and represents a congressional district in New York.

Influential women in my life have been both nontraditional and traditional women. For instance, my grandmother's sister, Tia Coco (Aunt Coco), wore long, starched cotton skirts and rode a horse sidesaddle to go campaigning for the governor of Puerto Rico. She never married, was an active volunteer at the local church, and was very influential in the community. Another woman was a friend of our household, Dona Fina, who was the principal in a rural school. She is a financial wizard and a sensitive, charitable member of the community. The four-term mayor of the capital city of San Juan, Dona Felisa Rincon de Gautier, has left strong memories in my mind as a politician who met with the people to help solve problems and served as a Democratic Party committeewoman in the U.S. until she was in her nineties.

EDUCATION AND CAREER

My educational experiences were all positive. Elementary school in the small town of Yabucoa, where my mother was my third-grade teacher and my father would have been my seventh grade teacher, was character forming. I then went to San Juan to attend junior high school and high school. I loved school and would pretend I was well even when I was running a fever in order not to miss school. When I was in my senior high school year, my father died.

My University of Puerto Rico years were full of hope because the island was developing more industries and there was the promise of good jobs for the future of women, even if mostly secretarial at first. After I came to the U.S. and started doing international things, I felt I needed to learn international relations. So as an adult, I earned a degree in international studies. But during most of my international experiences, I learned mainly by doing.

My work experiences have been very varied. I started in a governmental job in Puerto Rico, worked as a volunteer for several organizations, worked for the government of Puerto Rico in Washington, worked for the U.S. government in the House of Representatives and for an inter-American/intergovernmental organization, the Inter-American Commission of Women of the Organization of American States. I also served as a consultant to the U.S. Department of State and for a short time in a private consulting women-owned firm. My present job as director of government relations for the Girl Scouts of the USA completes this variety of jobs. Through all those career changes, the important things to me have been advancing women's and minority rights, serving the people of Puerto Rico, and fostering the cause of human development and human rights.

My career has always been influenced by the causes I support. The cause of equity and advancement for women has been the main theme. I have crisscrossed the U.S. and visited many countries making speeches and sharing my message. Public speaking is a special interest of mine as well as writing and collecting masks from all countries.

I am too involved with my work and volunteer activities to plan for my future. But I hope to do more writing, more work on behalf of the girls and young women of today who are our future, more travel, and continue my steadfast commitment to all the causes I believe in so strongly. However, I also hope to enjoy my grandchildren, Daniel and Alexandra, spending quality time with them and their families.

ADVICE

My advice to new immigrants is: Become U.S. citizens, learn English while keeping your original language, and fully participate in the democratic system by voting and doing service to your community. You can enjoy the "American way" and still be faithful to your original values and cultural traditions.

My advice to students who have classmates and neighbors who are new immigrants is: Be tolerant and take the opportunity to learn about their beliefs, traditions, hopes, and dreams. The U.S. is a great country because of its pluralism and because of all those flowers that have sprouted from the strong and proud roots that many U.S. citizens brought with them from other lands.

CARMEN DELGADO VOTAW

DIRECTIONS

After reading the interview with Carmen Delgado Votaw, complete the following activities.

1. Carmen Delgado Votaw is a Latino woman who came to the United States from Puerto Rico, which is a U.S. commonwealth, not a separate country like Mexico or Cuba. Find out what a "commonwealth" is. Identify and discuss what different requirements there are for people who immigrate from another country and for people who come to the mainland United States from a commonwealth such as Puerto Rico.

2. List three ideas or issues that are important to Carmen and that have helped her choose her life's work. List two ideas or concerns that are important to you and that might help you choose a career.

3. Carmen described several women who have influenced her during her life. Interview a parent or other relative in your family and ask them to describe a woman who has influenced that person's life.

4. Design a poster noting some of the parts of her Puerto Rican culture that Carmen has kept since she moved to the United States. Design a second poster showing parts of your family's culture that you enjoy.

5. Write two questions that you would like to ask Carmen Delgado Votaw to help you learn more about her life.

"MY NAME" FROM *THE HOUSE ON MANGO STREET* BY SANDRA CISNEROS

In English my name means "hope." In Spanish it means too many letters. It means sadness, it means waiting. It is like the number nine. A muddy color. It is the Mexican records my father plays on Sunday mornings when he is shaving, songs like sobbing.

It was my great-grandmother's name and now it is mine. She was a horsewoman too, born like me in the Chinese year of the horse—which is supposed to be bad luck if you're born female—but I think this is a Chinese lie because the Chinese, like the Mexicans, don't like their women strong.

My great-grandmother. I would've liked to have known her, a wild horse of a woman, so wild she wouldn't marry until my great-grandfather threw a sack over her head and carried her off. Just like that, as if she were a fancy chandelier. That's the way he did it.

Sandra Cisneros was born in 1954 in Chicago. She is the daughter of a Mexican father and a Mexican American mother. Although she was raised primarily in Chicago, her family moved back and forth between Chicago and Mexico. She was the only girl in a family of six boys. Cisneros is a writer of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry, in addition to being a teacher and a lecturer. She has received several honors and awards for her work. The House on Mango Street *is based on many of her own experiences.*

And the story goes she never forgave him. She looked out the window all her life, the way so many women sit their sadness on an elbow. I wonder if she made the best with what she got or was she sorry because she couldn't be all the things she wanted to be. Esperanza. I have inherited her name, but I don't want to inherit her place by the window.

At school they say my name funny as if the syllables were made out of tin and hurt the roof of your mouth. But in Spanish my name is made out of a softer something like silver, not quite as thick as my sister's name Magdalena, which is uglier than mine. Magdalena who at least can come home and become Nenny. But I am always Esperanza.

I would like to baptize myself under a new name, a name more like the real me, the one nobody sees. Esperanza as Lisandra or Maritza of Zeze the X. Yes. Something like Zeze, the X will do.

Mexican plantation owner and his wife tour their hacienda in 1834. SOURCE: *The Mexican Americans*, Julie Catalano, Chelsea House Publishers, New York, NY, 1988.

"MY NAME"

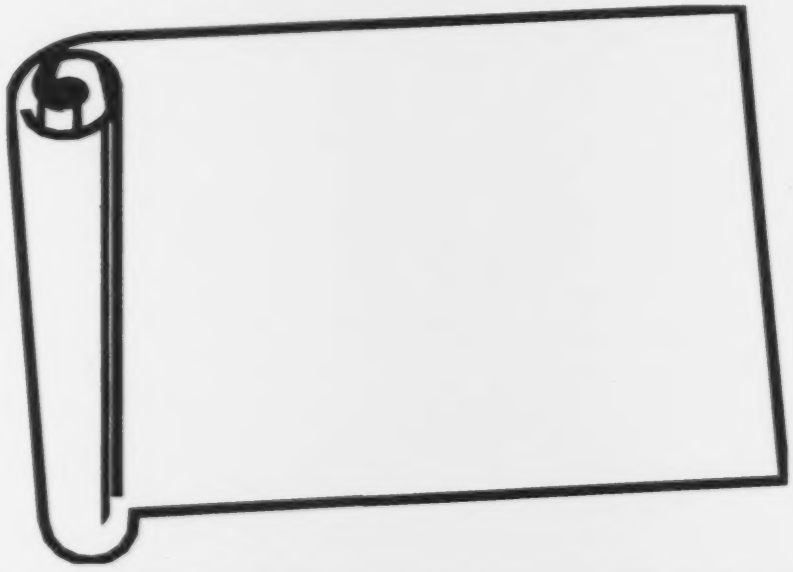
DIRECTIONS

1. After reading this selection from *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros, discuss the following questions with a partner or in small groups.

   - What is the name of the main character?
   - What does she like about her great-grandmother?
   - What does she mean when she says: "I don't want to inherit her place by the window"?
   - Why does she want a new name?

2. Where did your name come from? Does it have a special meaning? Were you named after someone in your family?

3. Write a poem and/or thoughts about your own name.



SELECTED STUDENT RESOURCES

BOOKS

Contemporary Hispanic Americans: Dolores Huerta, Frank Pérez, Raintree Steck-Vaugh Publishers, Austin, TX, 1996. A biography of the well-known activist Dolores Huerta.

Hispanic Women—Beginning Biographies, 1995. Distributed by the National Women's History Project, 7738 Bell Road, Windsor, CA 95492. The stories of four Latino women: Judy Baca, artist; Miriam Colón, actor and theater founder; Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, lawmaker; and Antonia Novello, doctor, are told in these beginning readers with engaging text and colorful illustrations.

Nineteenth-century painting of Spanish colonial aristocrats in Mexico. SOURCE: *The Mexican Americans*, Julie Catalano, Chelsea House Publishers, New York, NY, 1988.

Kids Explore America's Hispanic Heritage, Westridge Young Writers Workshop, John Muir Publications, Santa Fe, NM, 1992. Written by kids for kids, this book is intended to help Americans enjoy and appreciate a unique part of their heritage. Eighty-two students in the Westridge Young Writers Workshop collaborated to produce this kid's-eye view of America's Hispanic culture: history, food, festivals, art, stories, and language.

Latino Biographies, Globe Fearon Educational Publisher, Paramus, NJ, 1995. The biographies presented in the book introduce students to twenty-one Latinos who have been successful in different fields, including literature, fine arts and performance, science and mathematics, and public service and business. The book explores their diverse heritages and how these heritages influenced their lives. It also describes how these people achieved their career goals.

The Latino Experience in U.S. History, Pedro Caban, José Carrasco, Bárbara Cruz and Juan García, Globe Fearon Educational Publisher, Paramus, NJ, 1994. A textbook that highlights the history of Latinos in the United States. It covers periods as early as 1000 B.C. up to contemporary events. Interrelations between historical events in U.S. Latino history and Latin America are highlighted.

Mexican American Literature, Multicultural Literature Collection, Globe Book Company, a division of Simon & Schuster, New York, NY, 1993. Selected essays, stories, poems, interviews, and plays that reflect on the special traditions, beliefs, and heritages that are part of the Mexican American experience.

Of Secret Wars and Roses, Dinorah Sandoval, Network of Educators on the Americas (NECA), Washington, DC, 1987. A Salvadoran high school student in Los Angeles struggles with memories of home as she adjusts to life in the United States. Includes teaching ideas.

Wilfredo: Un Niño de El Salvador/A Boy from El Salvador, Network of Educators on the Americas (NECA), Washington, DC, 1988. A twelve year old describes his life in El Salvador and his move to the United States. With activity sheets, teacher's guide, and poems. (Bilingual)

Immigrant Women

◆ Soviet Jewish Women

INTRODUCTION: SOVIET JEWISH WOMEN

Nothing ever comes without going after it . . .
The world is a wheel, always turning.

—Anzia Yezierska
Russian Jewish American Writer

EMIGRATION FROM THE FORMER SOVIET UNION 1970s–1990s

In 1991, the country that had been known as the Soviet Union, a nation made up of fifteen Soviet republics, broke up into several separate nations. The largest of these nations is Russia, officially the Russian Federation. Nearly one million Jewish girls and women were among the two million Jews who immigrated to the United States in the late 1800s and early 1900s from Eastern Europe, including all of the areas that became part of the Soviet Union. Another major effort by Jews to emigrate from the Soviet Union occurred in the 1970s and 1980s.

During the 1970s, thousands of Jews facing anti-Semitism (discrimination and prejudice against Jews) expressed a desire to leave the Soviet Union. Most wanted to go to Israel or the United States. But the Soviet government at that time refused to allow many Jews to leave. These people were called "refuseniks," and they often lost their jobs, schooling, and other rights because they had asked for permission

198 BEST COPY AVAILABLE

to leave. Some were sent to prison. Sometimes families were separated when one family member was allowed to emigrate and others were not. Soviet Jewish women and men often lived in fear and were not allowed to practice their religion. Many Americans spoke out in the 1970s and 1980s in support of Soviet Jews having the right to live freely and to leave the Soviet Union.

In the 1990s, after the Soviet Union broke up into several separate nations, many more Jews from the former Soviet Union immigrated to the United States. They came to escape anti-Semitism, to find religious freedom, and to seek increased opportunities for education, good jobs, and better lives for their families.

FACTS AND FIGURES—1994

- In 1994, about 53 percent of the approximately 34,000 Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union to the United States were women. In 1988, only some 10,000 Soviet Jews had been allowed to emigrate.
- Almost all of the immigrant women who came to the United States were in the labor force (working for pay outside their homes) when they lived in the Soviet Union. Their major occupations were management, teaching, medicine, and office work.
- Almost 70 percent of all Soviet immigrants to the United States came from two nations, Russia and the Ukraine.
- The states where the most Soviet immigrants settled were New York, California, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Maryland.
- About half of the women immigrants were between the ages of twenty-one and sixty.

CONCLUSION

Following are the stories of Jewish women who immigrated to the United States from the former Soviet Union between 1970 and 1994. As you read their stories, note the similarities and differences between each of their experiences, as well as between their lives and those of the other immigrant women profiled in this manual.

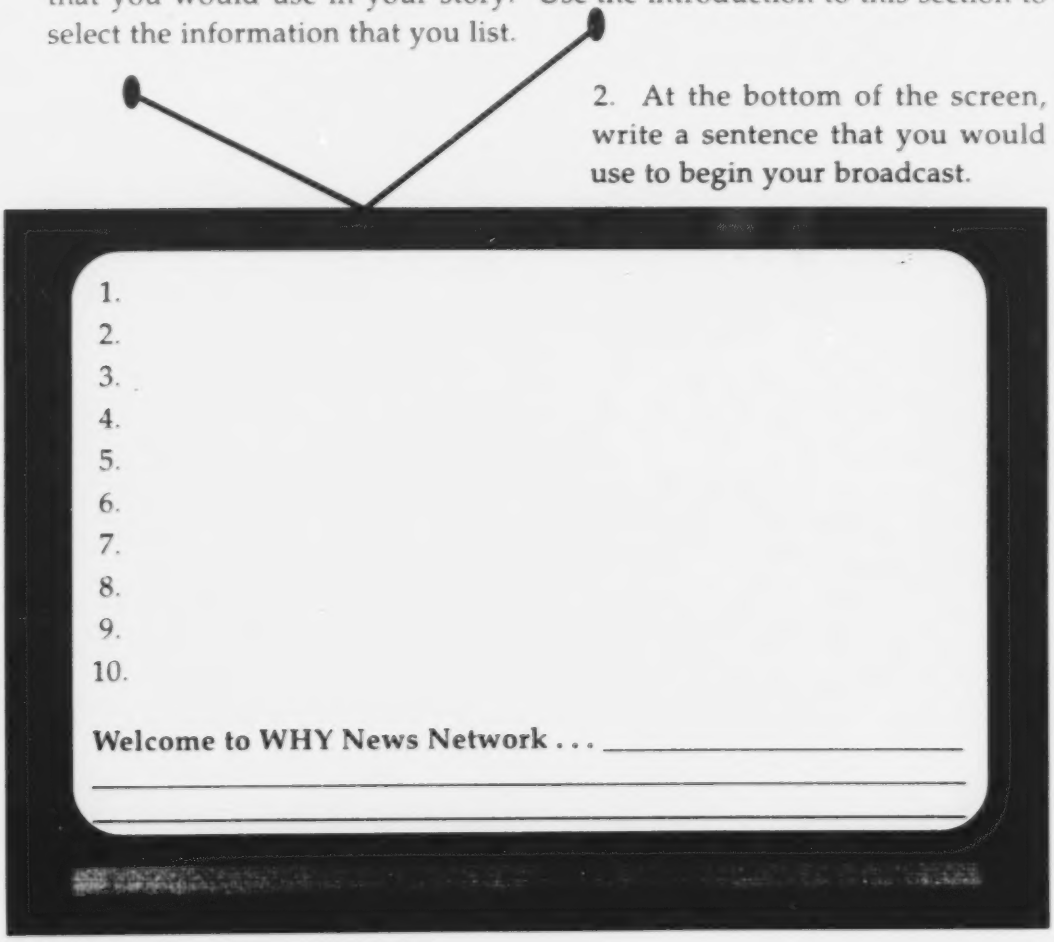
IN THE NEWS

DIRECTIONS

Imagine you are a TV newscaster doing a report for the WHY News Network on "Jewish Women Immigrants to the United States from the Former Soviet Union." Your producer wants to see the main points you plan to include in your story.

1. On the TV screen pictured below, write between five and ten facts or ideas that you would use in your story. Use the introduction to this section to select the information that you list.

2. At the bottom of the screen, write a sentence that you would use to begin your broadcast.



STUDENT ACTIVITY

RAIMONDA'S DIARY

DIRECTIONS

1. Read the selections that follow from the diaries of Raimonda Kopelnitsky, a girl who immigrated to the United States from the former Soviet Union when she was twelve years old.

2. Imagine that this is the day you are leaving to move to another country. Write a diary entry describing your feelings.

Dear Diary,

DIARIES OF RAIMONDA KOPELNITSKY

At age twelve, Raimonda Kopelnitsky, her parents, and her older brother left their home in the Ukraine (part of the former Soviet Union) to come to America. They emigrated because of anti-Semitism, discrimination against Jews. Raimonda wrote diaries for two years about her experiences, describing how she felt about leaving her city, coming to the United States, and adjusting to a new life. Some of her diary entries, which were published in a book, *No Words to Say Goodbye*, are printed below.

LEAVING HOME—1989

Right now, I live in the Soviet Union, in the city of Chernovtsy. In recent years there is a lot of anti-Semitism in our country, and we are certain that pogroms [attacks] against the Jews will be starting soon. That's why we're emigrating to America.

Right now we're packing our boxes and bags. Mama bought me new clothes, so big that I will grow into them slowly. I must leave behind my toys and my books. And also my grandparents. I will miss them very much.

We are scared of the future. Our apartment is beginning to be empty. We're giving our books and dishes and clothes to our grandparents—or we are selling it. Our pasts are dying in our present. And we cannot even know what the future will bring. I started to get very nervous, to tell the truth, everybody's nervous. But that is understandable. We're leaving soon.

SOURCE: *No Words to Say Goodbye*, Raimonda Kopelnitsky and Kelli Pryor, Hyperion Press, 1994. Copyright © 1994 Raimonda Kopelnitsky and Kelli Pryor.

ARRIVING IN NEW YORK—1990

This is the fourth day I've been in America! It was my dream, a dream that I could never realize. But here I'm free and no one will torment me; they'll only help me, and I don't feel any envy of anything.

We went into New York City and went to a cafe or restaurant, and that's where we ordered McDonald's hamburgers, which I have never eaten before. I was surprised to see Sasha picking up the whole food and eating it all together. I took everything out and ate it all separately with a fork and knife. It was my first hamburger. They tried to convince me to eat it all together, but I didn't agree. We later saw the Statue of Liberty and shouted "Hurray" to American freedom.

SETTLING IN—1990

It's been two days already that I've been going to school—Public School: McKinley Junior High on Fort Hamilton Avenue—the seventh grade, for emigrants. I'll be there until I've learned English. There are eight Russians,

many Hispanics, Chinese, Arabs, and other children in my class. The Chinese stick together, the Hispanics talk with everybody, and the Russians sit at one table but talk with everybody.

I wanted to write to you about school. When I first came I probably hated school, but now I've gotten used to it. I understand the freedom which is given in school, too. I have friends—Russians, Chinese, Korean, Hispanics. Most Americans are too far away and too alien for me, still.

Sometimes I'm "ashamed" to read aloud in class even though everyone knows I have a Russian accent. Some kids laugh at my accent, but in a friendly way. I don't get mad, but they never stop to think that they would never say a word if they were to come to Russia. I haven't made any "real" friends. I am trying to understand American teenagers, but I just can't. I hope one day I will understand or get to know their way of being a teenager, being an American.

MAKING A NEW LIFE IN AMERICA—1992

So many things changed and some stayed. And I changed. I don't remember my emigration life and never remind myself of it. I don't dream about my hometown and I'm not homesick anymore. What am I? Russian, I answer. But I don't live in Russia, I don't feel like Russian. I just have a piece of sad and happy memories of my childhood somewhere inside of me. But I'm afraid to touch those memories, I'm afraid to awaken them, let them live in me. Why?

I'm often thinking about English and Russian languages. I talk English at school, and I talk Russian at home. In what language should I write a diary? I don't know which language is closer or better to me. Anyway, writing in English, I don't feel this language. I don't know if I write right or wrong. But pretty often I think I am wrong. I make mistakes and I hate to check them. However, English is a part of my life, the first way to become an American. It's a way to learn this language, to feel this life because it's an American life and nothing else. So should I write in my native language, which I can feel but not live in, or should I continue in the English language, which I don't feel and which I hardly know (compared with Americans) because this is a language of my new country, my new life?

What am I? I can't answer that I am an American, because I am not. First, you can see my English. English as a second language. Second, there are so many differences: The way I speak, I live. At last, what am I? Who am I? Am I still an immigrant? I know I've changed, but I still don't know who I've become.

Sometimes I feel that emigration has taught me to understand life better and people, too. At least I know I am not as empty as I was. I don't hate anybody. I have no enemies. America itself has changed something in me. Now I want to go forward, to get to my goal. I am in a good mood and feel lucky, too. Lucky for everything, for my new friends and for my old friends.

And I will say again and again that I love this country because there are so many things you can love here. You can make your dreams come true, you can do so much and make your own choices.

Artwork by Lily Shabunin, age 15, immigrant from the Soviet Union. Picture courtesy of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, 1995.

DIARIES OF RAIMONDA KOPELNITSKY

DIRECTIONS

1. After you have read selections from Raimonda's diaries, discuss the following questions with a partner or in a small group.

   - How did Raimonda feel about leaving her home in the Ukraine?
   - What were Raimonda's thoughts about being Jewish and about anti-Semitism in the former Soviet Union?
   - What did Raimonda expect life to be like in the United States? How did her feelings about the United States change as two years passed?
   - What did Raimonda remember about her life in the Ukraine? What new customs and traditions did she find in the United States?
   - How did Raimonda feel about learning a new language?
   - After two years in the United States, did Raimonda consider herself an American? Why or why not?

2. Write three questions you would like to ask Raimonda about her experiences.

   (1)

   (2)

   (3)

FAINA VAYNERMAN AND INNA GILLER

LEAVING THE FORMER SOVIET UNION

Inna Giller and Faina Vaynerman are sisters who emigrated from the former Soviet Union at different times in their lives. Inna came to the United States in 1979 at age thirty-two, from Kiev, the Ukraine, and Faina came in 1993 at age fifty-four from the city of Ulyanowsk, Russia. Both women came with their husbands and their children. When they left their native land, Faina was a journalist and Inna was a teacher of English.

Both women left seeking better lives for their children and families, since they saw no positive future in Russia. There was a great deal of anti-Semitism, anti-Jewish feeling and behavior, in the Soviet Union, which the government allowed and in many cases supported. "The seeds of anti-Jewish feelings that the government planted in the mind of the people grew, and anti-Jewish actions were widespread," Inna and Faina stated.

In their education and in their jobs in the former Soviet Union, Faina and Inna faced discrimination because they were Jewish. Faina was one of the top students in her high school but was denied the "gold medal" that was given to the best students. Jews could not attend certain colleges, and both Faina and Inna did not get promotions in their jobs because of their Jewish background.

In spite of the fact that their father had been an honored Russian soldier during World War II and had received medals for bravery and recognition in his town as an outstanding worker, the family were still treated unfairly because they were Jews. Even when Inna's family left the Soviet Union, all of the members were treated differently than people who were leaving who weren't Jewish. Government officials made it hard for her to get the necessary papers to leave, and many of her personal possessions were taken away from her at the border. Inna commented:

> *We were treated like traitors when we left, and were embarrassed and humiliated by officials at the train station. It was an awful experience.*

While she was still in the Ukraine, Faina stood up for her rights one day when she was shopping in a pharmacy. As two very large young men who had been drinking alcohol heavily started commenting loudly about how terrible Jews were and how they shouldn't be allowed to live in the Soviet Union, Faina answered back, "I'm proud of my people. I don't want to hear these words—you are forcing us to leave, even though we are good citizens of this town." When one of them asked her, "Are you still here, in my country? Why are you not in Israel?", she became so angry that even though she was much smaller and weaker than the man, she slapped him. As he raised his arm to strike her, she broke away and yelled for the police to be called. When the police came,

they took the men to the station. Even though the men had been disobeying a new law about being drunk in public, the police didn't support Faina and didn't punish the two men.

When Inna first left the Soviet Union, Faina was angry with her for leaving their homeland. Even though conditions were not good for Jews, Faina felt that the family should stay there. The sisters did not talk for many years but later became good friends again, and Faina decided she also had to come to the United States. She was "torn with pain" about leaving her home of over fifty years.

SURPRISES IN AMERICA

When Inna and Faina first came to United States, they were surprised by several things, one being the large number of choices in the stores. Inna said that going to the grocery store felt like "going to a museum," because the stores in the Ukraine had far fewer choices of products and the U.S. stores had "so many things we had never tried before." She was also surprised that there was so much waste of money, of paper, and so forth. She had thought that Americans would be much more organized and careful about not wasting things. Inna also was surprised by the number of cars in America, and the lack of good public transportation. "Everybody here needs a car." She also noted that more women drive in America; in the Soviet Union driving was a "man's thing" and not many women had driver's licenses.

Faina commented on how much paperwork and "bureaucracy" exists in the United States and how many different steps it takes to get things done by the government and by organizations. She was also surprised about the high cost of health care and child care, and how women are expected to work up to the end of their pregnancy and then return to work right away. Women in Russia got leave for two months before and after they gave birth, and then were granted leave for two years after the birth of their child, with a promise of having their jobs back. But now a lot of these things were changing in Russia, some against the interests of women. She was impressed by the cleanliness of public buildings and bathrooms and was surprised by the lack of good-quality television shows and the amount of TV advertising. She noted that "for much of TV, you don't have to think at all." Faina and Inna worry about race relations in this

country, as well as relations between Jewish students who have lived in the United States for many years and recent Jewish immigrants. They hope that all people will learn to live together with respect for each other.

SETTLING AND ADJUSTING

Faina and Inna were supported in settling by organizations such as the local Jewish Family Services. Inna now works for the Jewish Community Center and Faina is at home, her work limited by health problems. Faina worked previously in a store and as a baby sitter, and is currently a full-time student taking college courses at Baltimore Hebrew University. She continues to study English while also learning Hebrew; she will soon have an associate in arts degree in Jewish education.

Because she spoke English well before she came to the United States, Inna found adjusting was easier for her. She helped the rest of the family ask questions, fill out forms, and get settled. She and Faina noted that the many similarities between Soviet and other American European cultures helped them adjust. As women, they felt that their experiences were not much different from those of Soviet men, except that men had more expectations for men than for women to get better-paying jobs.

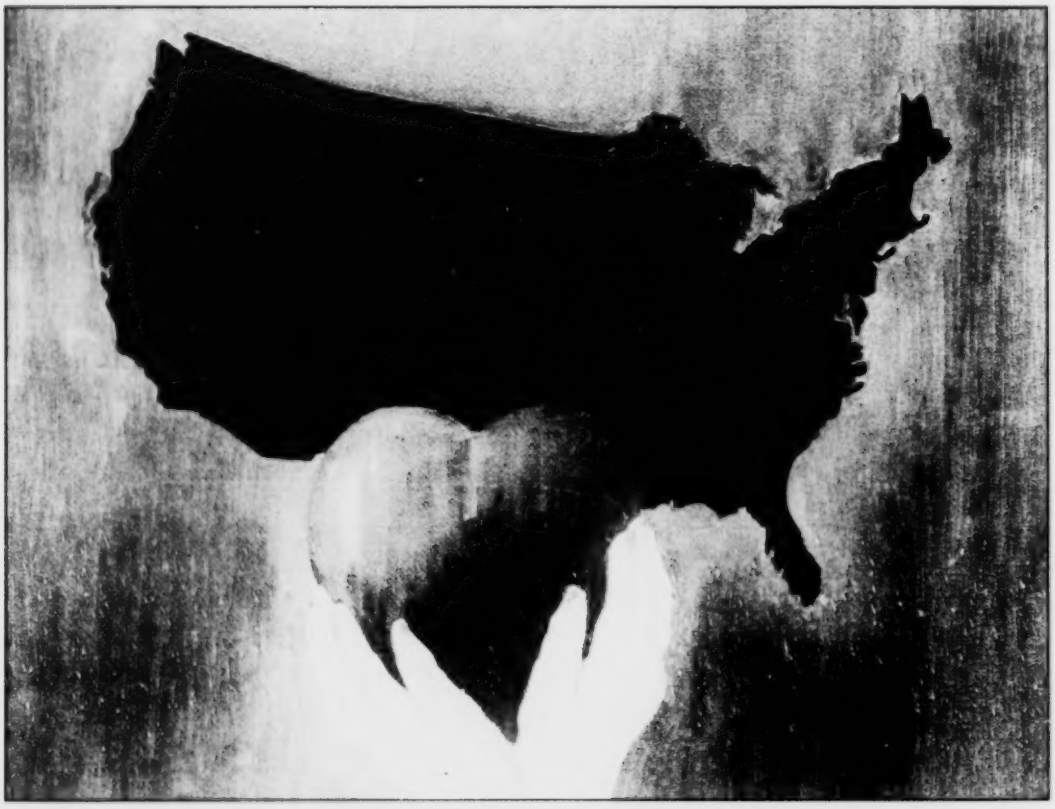
Faina, who spoke no English before she came to the United States, regrets not learning the language earlier. "Anyone deciding to move to another country should prepare themselves by learning the language if at all possible." She also noted that it's easy to become depressed when you immigrate if you expect to have the same level of job in the United States, "I know a man who was a high-level scientist in Russia, but his job in the United States for several months was sweeping out classrooms." She added that you should "expect the best but prepare for the worst," and should know that you must be a student all of your life, in order to learn a new culture. Faina has had a particularly difficult time in her new country; her only child, twenty-three-year-old son Igor, who was working days and nights as a pizza delivery person to pay for his education, was shot and killed during a robbery attempt. This terrible event has changed her life forever, and she is saddened knowing that Igor will never be able to live

out the dream he had for a good life in America. She believes that she now has to "live day by day, again and again, to establish my life." She appreciates even more the support of caring friends and family especially in difficult times.

ADVICE TO NEW IMMIGRANTS

Inna asserts that,

if you want to achieve, you need to learn the language of your new culture, especially to get a good job. Prepare for hard work and don't expect a lot right away. Remember, it's a long way to achieve anything, because you're starting everything new.



Artwork by Larry Masarsky, age 11, immigrant from the former Soviet Union. Picture courtesy of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, 1995.

211 BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Faina advises that

you're a newcomer, no one invited you to come to the U.S. You need to be a good student to learn a new culture. Don't think about your past; think about your future. It doesn't help to always compare your old and new life. You have to work hard and have faith to achieve. What happens to you when you first immigrate is not what will be the same for the rest of your life. Time will bring changes at different ages.

Inna and Faina agree that new immigrants can't live in the past. They have to be realists, not idealists, about what they can accomplish. Faina adds,

Have a dream and don't blame your circumstances on anyone else. Learn to be self-reliant as the American culture expects you to be.

MESSAGE TO STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

Inna expressed a concern that immigrant children sometimes try so hard to be "Americans" that they lose parts of their home culture, such as their language. She believes that schools should teach children about other cultures and how valuable and important all cultures are. She hopes that students

will be sensitive and befriend immigrant students, and not act selfishly like snobs toward immigrants. If students look at themselves and their family tree, they will see that all people's roots are the same. Except for American Indians, we all came from somewhere else. American-born students need to think of their ancestors and treat newcomers as they would have wanted their own family treated. They should remember that immigrants want to be Americans as much as young people born here do.

GALINA BORODKINA

MOVING TO THE UNITED STATES

I arrived in the U.S. on February 22, 1993, at the age of forty-six from Russia. I settled in Baltimore, Maryland, where I am presently living with my husband, our children, and my parents.

I left my native country because I felt my children were in danger. Being aware of the history and memories of the Jewish people, I felt a great similarity between Russia of the 1990s and Germany of the 1930s, when many Jews were killed. This strong feeling or sense of danger is the only reason we left.

My family and I had never been abroad before; so our feelings were mixed. We had no relatives in the U.S., but we had a keen interest in this country and knew that it would be a challenge. I guess the main thing was we had no illusions when we came.

I can remember that I was very impressed with the friendliness of Americans and the clean streets when I first arrived. I had expected the U.S. to be a country of equal opportunities; but I was refused many jobs due to my lack of "American" experience, and this both surprised and disappointed me. In fact, I was refused job offers, despite my willingness to demonstrate my skills as a volunteer and thus honestly compete with Americans.

CHALLENGES AND SUPPORT

I think the biggest challenges I faced were to maintain the spirit of self-confidence among the members of my family and to inspire them to continue to search for jobs and not to give up. I had to keep the light at the end of the tunnel visible to all of them.

"Open-mindedness" was what helped us in starting our new lives here in the U.S. Just as in Russia, we relied only on ourselves. We always felt that no one was obliged to help us and that we would find the greatest support among ourselves.

In addition to the factors of race, nationality, sex, etc., being an immigrant in itself is extremely stressful. You are supposed to be much more qualified, educated, and professional than other people in order to be considered for a job. Patience and certitude have helped me in handling barriers: knowing that I should try again and again and realizing that I must never lose hope.

I feel now that more things depend on me rather than on my circumstances. Traditions or aspects of my native culture that I have kept are my great devotion to the family. The importance of having a good education, and a love of literature and music. My close friends are what I miss the most about my native country.

EXPERIENCE AS A FEMALE

Women are much more flexible than men. Women are survivors. I have never regarded each nonsuccess as a "failure," the way a man might do. I have always concentrated on how to find the way out of a problem or situation, not on the problem or what has happened. What is similar for both Russian and American women is their keen sense of responsibility and love for their children. Both groups are also very flexible. However, American women do not "melt" into their families. They manage to keep their own personalities.

Golda Meir and Mother Teresa are the two women who have been most influential in my life.

WORK, EDUCATION, AND INTERESTS

In 1969, I graduated from the University of Kiev as a language instructor. My majors were French, English and American literature, and English as a second language (ESOL). In 1993, I graduated from the same university with a degree in Russian as a second language. I was an instructor in Russia for twenty-five years and enjoyed my work immensely. Now I am a receptionist at the Jewish Family Services and an ESOL teacher.

I am a teacher by nature, For me, to get a job as a teacher is like getting a gulp of oxygen when there is almost no air left to breathe. The process of teaching should be a pleasure for both students and teachers alike. Only in this way can one obtain good results.

ADVICE FOR NEW IMMIGRANTS

I would tell them not to have any illusions. I would tell them not to wait and ask for help. Americans have a lot of problems of their own. I would tell them to always be grateful and not to forget that America let them come. I would tell them never to demand anything except for equal treatment and to try to become independent as soon as possible.

Rely only on yourself and your family. Prove first to yourself and then to others that you are useful to this country. As soon as you become a taxpayer, no one can reprimand you for eating someone else's bread.

ADVICE FOR STUDENTS WHOSE CLASSMATES AND NEIGHBORS ARE NEW IMMIGRANTS

Recent immigrants are the same as you, but your ancestors just happened to have arrived here earlier. Be empathetic—it could have been you in their shoes. Treat them the way you would like to be treated under the same circumstances.

MARGARITA KONONOVA

MOVING TO THE UNITED STATES

My family and I came to the U.S. from Uzbekistan, the former Soviet Union, in 1993. We settled down in a two-bedroom apartment. We were practically pushed out of Uzbekistan—the country we had been living in for over twenty years. It was obvious that we were not wanted there anymore. I had mixed feelings about coming to the U.S. I felt sad and frustrated, but also excited about the expectations of something new and challenging.

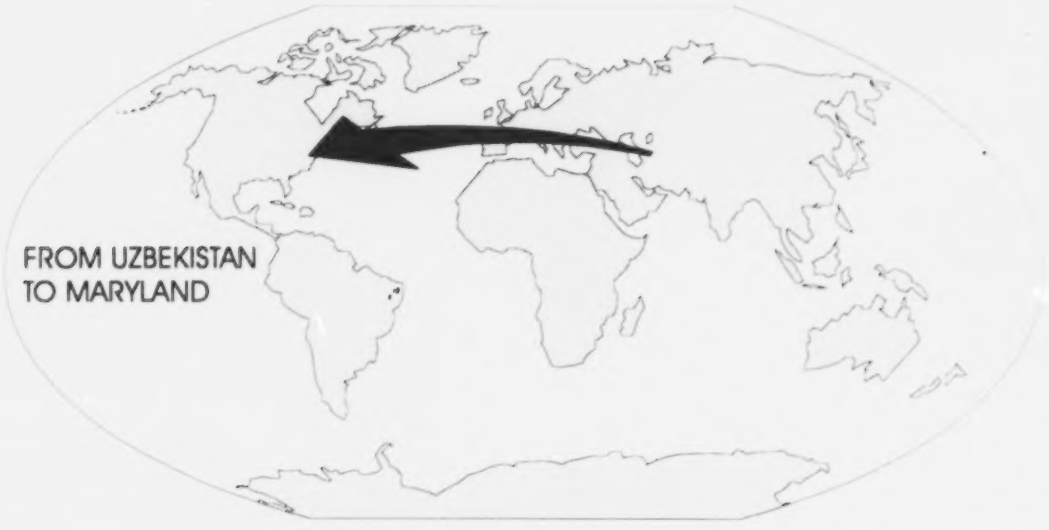
IMPRESSIONS OF THE UNITED STATES

Prior to my immigration, I came to the U.S. to visit my aunt about seven years ago. I saw then what life was like for new immigrants. I didn't expect anything different for me. The biggest challenge was to find a job. I alternated between sensations of hope and feelings of despair and pessimism. I constantly had to "pluck up my courage" to overcome the latter.

My relatives and the Jewish Family Services helped me a lot when I first came. The Jewish Vocational Service, which assists new immigrants when they first arrive, also supported me greatly. I never felt that I was treated unfairly or differently here because of my language, nationality, or sex.

Life has become qualitatively better for me, to say nothing of my daughters, who hopefully will succeed in their careers. America has given us better opportunities in life. What do I miss about my native country? Only my friends of many years.

Margarita Kononova is the mother of Jennifer Noznitsky, whose interview follows these pages.



EXPERIENCE AS A FEMALE

My husband and I make almost the same amount of money, and we share the household chores equally. My experiences and my husband's have been very similar. Women in the U.S. are more independent and self-reliant than in Uzbekistan. But American women experience the same feelings as women in my native land.

My aunt, Miriam Fromberg, has been very influential in my life. I admire her lifestyle and her friendly and outgoing way of treating other people. I would like to be like her.

WORK, EDUCATION, AND INTERESTS

I have two jobs at the moment. I work as a translator for Russian patients at a Hospital Ambulatory Clinic and I teach English for Speakers of Other Languages [ESOL] *for adult education programs.*

JENNIFER NOZNITSKY

There were many reasons for leaving the former U.S.S.R. Most importantly, there was no future for me as a Jewish young female.

While leaving my country, I had mixed feelings on one hand. I was scared and sad because I was leaving a country in which I spent twelve years. But going to the U.S. gave me a lot of hope.

There were many new impressions of the U.S. I was overwhelmed by the new lifestyle. The biggest challenge for me was to quickly adjust to the American way of life. Shortly after coming to the U.S. I went to an American middle school. I had to learn everything on my own. Since there was no one at that time to explain it to me, I had to learn a lot on my own. But my family supported me and gave me strength. Also, a few of my friends helped me in starting my life in a new culture. Fortunately, I wasn't discriminated against. However, in the beginning children at school did not want to associate with me because I was a Russian immigrant. Naturally, every aspect of my life has changed in some way since I came to the U.S.

I think that it was harder for me to adjust to changes because of the nature of women. Women are more sensitive and gentle. However, in other respects, women are much stronger than men. I think one can find a lot of similarities between the women in the U.S. and women in Russia. My mother has been very influential in my life. She is a very strong person who managed to accomplish a lot both here and back in the former U.S.S.R.

Jennifer Noznitsky is the daughter of Margarita Kononova. She came to the United States with her family in 1993 from Uzbekistan when she was twelve years old.

At first, I was attending a public middle school. At this time, I am a sophomore at a Jewish community school. I'm interested in studying foreign languages. At this point, I'm learning Spanish and Hebrew, as well as sign language. After finishing high school, I plan on going to college and later to medical school and become a doctor.

The only advice I can give new immigrants is to be strong. To find strength within yourself in order to overcome the hardships of a new life. And, most importantly: Never Give Up!

Artwork by Tania Brodsky, age 12, immigrant from the former Soviet Union. Picture courtesy of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, 1995.

REFLECTIONS: VOICES OF SOVIET JEWISH WOMEN

DIRECTIONS

After reading the interviews of Soviet Jewish women, complete the following activities:

1. Discuss these questions:
   - What is anti-Semitism?
   - How did it affect the lives of the women interviewed?
   - What other groups of people have come to the United States because of unfair treatment or discrimination in their homelands?
2. On a map of the former Soviet Union, locate the countries where each of the women interviewed lived before coming to the United States. Find out more about life today in one of those countries, particularly about life for women and how it is different from life for women in the United States.
3. Design a sign to welcome one of the women interviewed to your community. Include one fact about that woman on your sign (for example, *WELCOME GALINA BORODKINA, TEACHER OF ENGLISH!*).

WORLD IMMIGRATION WEB PART 1—WEB SITE

DIRECTIONS

1. Imagine that you are in front of a computer screen and have signed on to a computer network, WORLD IMMIGRATION WEB. You have gone to the site on SOVIET UNION—JEWISH WOMEN to find out more about specific Jewish women immigrants to the United States from the former Soviet Union. You have identified some women for further study—Galina Borodkina, Inna Gilner, Margarita Kononova, Jennifer Noznitsky, and Faina Vaynerman.

2. Log in your name: _____

3. From the computer MENU below, select a category of interest and the name of a woman you would like to know more about. Click on (put an x in the box next to) those categories and a woman's name.

MENU

Categories		Names	
Country of Origin	❑	Galina B.	❑
Year of Departure	❑	Inna G.	❑
Education	❑	Margarita K.	❑
Career	❑	Faina V.	❑
Family	❑	Jennifer N.	❑

Other—Enter three of your own categories (areas you want to learn about)

_____	❑	_____	❑
_____	❑		

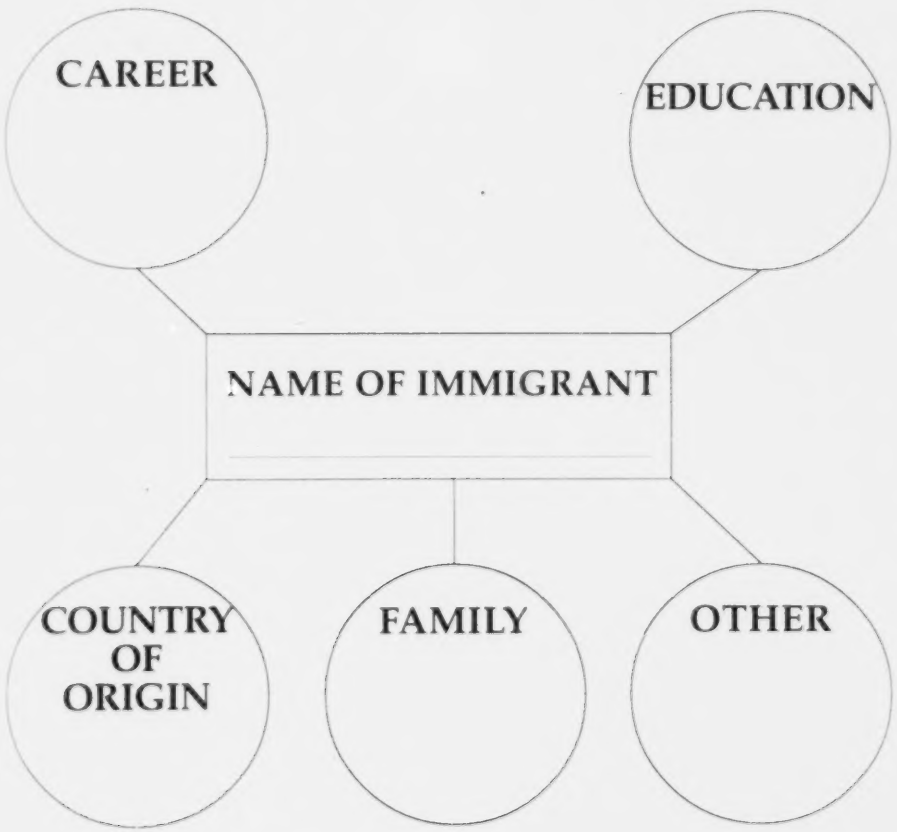
4. Click (go to) the site (page) in this manual that has information about the woman you selected. Read that page.

5. Click (go to) the page that follows this one—"World Immigration Web Home Page"—to record the information you gathered from your reading.

WORLD IMMIGRATION WEB PART 2—HOME PAGE

DIRECTIONS

1. Choose three or four categories that you selected from the World Immigration Web Site (previous page).
2. In the circles below, write one byte (piece) of information that you learned from reading about a woman immigrant.



WHAT AMERICA MEANS TO ME

This drawing is by Lily Shabunin, age fifteen, a student who immigrated to the United States from the former Soviet Union. It expresses her thoughts and feelings about "What America Means to Me."

DIRECTIONS

1. Write a paragraph or poem describing what the picture tells you about Lily's impressions of America.

2. Imagine that you have just moved from another country to the United States. Design and draw a poster expressing what America means to you.

Artwork by Lily Shabunin, age 15, immigrant from the former Soviet Union. Picture courtesy of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, 1995.

SELECTED STUDENT RESOURCES

BOOKS

Dimitry, A Young Soviet Immigrant, Joanne E. Berstein and Michael J. Bernstein, Clarion Books, New York, NY, 1981. An account of a young Soviet boy's experiences as his family moves from Moscow to the United States.

Letters to Rivka, Karen Hesse, Henry Holt, New York, NY, 1992. In letters to her cousin, a young Russian Jewish immigrant details her experiences in America in the early 1900s.

The Melting Pot: An Adventure in New York, Union of American Hebrew Congregations, New York, NY, 1994. A "Do It Yourself" adventure story for young teens about Soviet/Eastern European Jewish immigrants to New York in the early 1900s, where readers make choices on each page as if they were immigrants. Choices determine the reader's "future" as the book continues.

Molly's Pilgrim, Barbara Cohen, Lothrop, Lee, and Shepard, New York, NY, 1983. A young Jewish immigrant from Russia shows how her search for religious freedom in coming to America in modern times is similar to the story of the Pilgrims coming to colonial America. (Also available in video)

No Words to Say Goodbye: A Young Jewish Woman's Journey from the Soviet Union into America, Raimonda Kopelnitsky and Kelli Pryor, Hyperion Books, New York, NY, 1994. The diaries of Raimonda Kopelnitsky, a twelve-year-old immigrant who leaves her home in the Ukraine in the former Soviet Union to build a new life in the United States.

Immigrant Women

- **Vietnamese Women**

INTRODUCTION: THE VIETNAMESE IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE

If you don't remember history accurately,
how can you learn?

—Maya Lin
Vietnamese American Architect

WAR IN VIETNAM

In 1954, Vietnam, a country in Southeast Asia comparable in size to Louisiana, was divided in two after a war of independence ended French control in the area. The North became Communist, led by Ho Chi Minh, and the South became anti-Communist, ruled by Ngo Dinh Diem. Neither country viewed the other as the true Vietnam, and both wanted to reunify all of Vietnam. Thus began the Vietnam War (1954–1975).

In 1963, the government of Ngo Dinh Diem was overthrown. The United States, fearing the spread of communism in the region, became involved in the fighting (after years of supplying money to the anti-Communist South). By 1965, there were 184,000 U.S. combat troops stationed in Vietnam, and a terrible, controversial war, which cost many Vietnamese and American lives, continued until American combat troops were withdrawn in 1973.

In 1975, the United States evacuated all remaining Americans and many Vietnamese who had worked with Americans during the war. The Communist North Vietnamese People's Army seized the capital of South Vietnam, Saigon (now called Ho Chi Minh City), and declared the reunification of the country under Communist rule.

JOURNEY TO AN UNKNOWN LAND

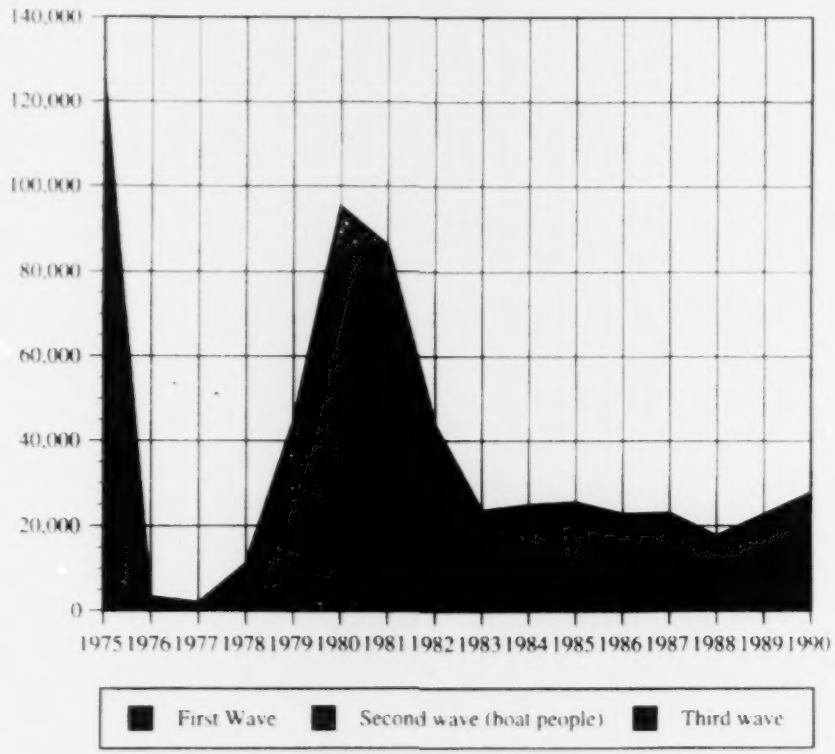
Before 1970, there were about 245,000 Vietnamese living in the United States. Today there are about four times as many. After the war, Vietnamese refugees came to the United States in a series of "waves," starting with the fall of Saigon in 1975. Like the primarily diplomats, students, and teachers who had come before 1970, the first wave was composed mainly of Vietnamese who already knew quite a lot about the United States, who had learned some English while they worked with Americans during the war, and who tended to be well educated. Later waves of refugees escaped from the life the Communist

Americans and other foreigners evacuate Saigon, which was about to fall to the North Vietnamese Communists in 1975. SOURCE: UPI, April 30, 1975.

government attempted to impose on them. They were often separated from other family members and knew little, if any, English. Many had no American contacts, little education, and almost no personal resources.

They were making a journey into the unknown. Some of them made terrifying escapes overland through mountains or by sea in small boats. They were attacked by pirates, or were detained in overcrowded refugee camps for months, even years, waiting for clearance to make the last stage of the journey to settle in America. They left a country whose geography, customs, and history were very dear to them; they left against their will.

Admissions of Vietnamese Refugees to the United States: 1975–1980



SOURCE: *Vietnamese Americans*, American Voices Series, Susan Auerbach, Rourke Corp., Vero Beach, FL, 1991.

CONCLUSION

Many Vietnamese immigrants to the United States have encountered many serious problems. Those who arrived with limited education had greater barriers to overcome, and many Vietnamese Americans still live in poverty, with inadequate social services available to them. Refugees who experienced traumatic and violent attacks en route to the United States may have had difficulty moving beyond terrible memories of their passages to America or the harsh environments of refugee camps where they spent prolonged periods of anxiety, even despair, and where their education was interrupted.

It is never a good idea to assume that all members of any group are equipped to overcome obstacles to success. It's hard to learn a new culture and a new language at the same time and to move back and forth from one culture and language at home to another very different one at school or on the job.

One irony of the Vietnamese experience in America is that many Vietnamese immigrants have gravitated to Vietnamese American communities where it would be possible to live and work without learning English very well. Many Vietnamese immigrants live in certain states, and very few live in others. This has the advantage of providing newcomers with support systems of shop owners, lawyers, doctors, and others who speak Vietnamese and know Vietnamese culture. However, it may slow the likelihood of newcomers making strides to feel more comfortable elsewhere in the United States.

Vietnamese refugees. SOURCE: *The World Book Encyclopedia*, World Book, Inc., Chicago, IL, 1990.

Some Asian children have been adopted by non-Asian parents in the United States, and they may know only what they've learned from books and friendships about their Asian country of origin.

What's exciting about our diverse American culture, enriched by many immigrant groups, is that there's so much to learn and share. To profit from our diversity takes the courage to reach out and ask questions that may initially show our lack of knowledge but will also show our goodwill. We need to trust and encourage each other as we learn about our multiple heritages.

States with a Southeast Asian Refugee Population of 20,000 or More, 1990

Note: Vietnamese refugees constitute about two-thirds of the total Southeast Asian refugee population in the United States.

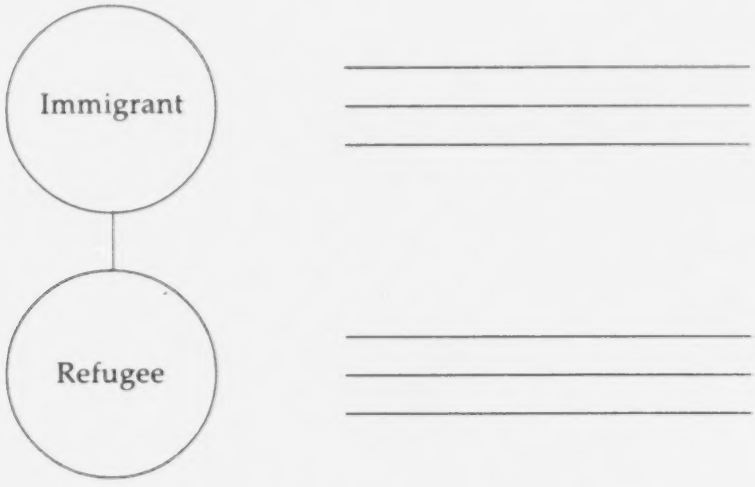
SOURCE: *Vietnamese Americans*, American Voices Series, Susan Auerbach, Rourke Corp., Vero Beach, FL, 1991.

JOURNEY TO AN UNKNOWN LAND

Not all journeys are planned beforehand. Some journeys begin because people leave their homelands to escape oppression and war. These kinds of journeys have been occurring for many centuries. Can you think of groups of people who embarked on such journeys in the past? People who leave their homes because of persecution or war are often called **refugees**.

DIRECTIONS

1. Use the diagram below to put into your own words how a refugee is different from an immigrant.



2. Write a short narrative about a person your age and gender who made a journey into the unknown. Be sure to include information about the reasons for the journey, the risks involved, the obstacles along the way, and the outcome of the journey.

SOURCE: Adapted from *Teaching Strategies for Ethnic Studies*, 5th ed., James A. Banks, Allyn and Bacon, Boston, 1991.

VOICES FROM VIETNAM

Despite terrible hardships, many Vietnamese refugees accomplished a lot very quickly once they got to America. One of the ways they succeeded was by continuing a traditional Vietnamese emphasis on acquiring an education as a strategy for getting ahead. The stories of four women who came to the United States from Vietnam at different times and under different circumstances are contained in this unit.

SOURCE: *Southeast Asian Americans*, Maher and Selwyn, Turman Publishing Co., Seattle, WA, 1995.

HUONG TRAN NGUYEN

Huong Tran Nguyen was a visiting teacher at the United States Department of Education in the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs in 1995. In this position she gave a classroom teacher's voice and perspective to national education activities. She was also honored as the Walt Disney Company's National Foreign Language/English as a Second Language Teacher of the Year in 1994, having taught in Orange County, California, for over eighteen years.

Huong Tran arrived all alone in the United States in 1971 when she was only seventeen years old. She had graduated from an elite French private high school in Vietnam, and she planned to continue her education in the United States. She also hoped to escape the war-torn environment of Saigon, where she had witnessed a Buddhist monk set himself on fire to protest Catholic persecution of Buddhists, and death and destruction during the 1968 Tet (New Year's) military offensive mounted by the Communist Viet Cong (North Vietnamese) soldiers against American and South Vietnamese forces.

Huong Tran and her mother "had much convincing to do," since her father felt she was "too young and naive" to go to "such a faraway place."

Her parents and eight siblings accompanied her to the airport.

When I boarded the Air France 747 Boeing, I turned back and saw everyone's hands waving desperately at me, calling my name, and shedding more tears. It was an excruciating moment for me. I felt totally torn and was tempted to run back into my loved ones' arms. I seriously questioned my reason for leaving my homeland. The flight attendant's last call to board brought me back to reality.

Huong arrived at San Diego International Airport, having abandoned her original plan to attend college in Ohio. Her older brother, who had also earlier left Vietnam to study engineering in West Germany, urged her to seek out a climate more like Vietnam's, in California.

Watching television shows and movies on the American channel had given me the impression that the majority of Americans were well-to-do. Practically everyone on television had cars, a commodity [not typical] in Vietnam. I expected that most Americans would be either blonde or redhead! I thought the weather was much too cold for me when I first arrived. I was amazed at how large everything was: freeways, the portions of food served in restaurants, the people, department stores, supermarkets.

My biggest surprise was the type of rice served in the dormitory cafeteria at the University of San Diego (where I attended, roomed, and boarded). The server placed a soggy scoop of 'rice' on my plate. I was used to eating a much larger amount of rice; it's our staple! It did not look, smell, or taste like the kind of fragrant and glutinous rice my mother used to fix. I thought American food was bland, rich, and fattening. I missed all the mouth-watering dishes from home rich with flavor, spices, aroma, freshness and zest!

I was disappointed at how much violence and profanity occurred on television and in movies children could easily have access to and be influenced by.

Huong Tran made friends with a small group of Vietnamese students who also had visas prohibiting them from employment (and therefore competing with American workers) while studying. They formed a "support group" and were able to share some of the "customs, mores, traditions, views, religion, and ways of life" from home. Even with her Vietnamese friends, Huong Tran experienced a lot of depression and nostalgia for home. She also experienced unfair treatment from some of her teachers. One told her she would have to accept the fact that, because she wasn't a native English-speaking student, she would never be able to catch up to her American-born classmates in her teacher-credentialing program. This same teacher had trouble with Huong Tran's name and said, "Why can't you change your name to something I can pronounce?" "She did not understand that my name, 'Thu Huong,' means 'Autumn Fragrance.'"

Huong Tran managed to succeed by concentrating on continuing her education successfully, and also by maintaining other Vietnamese traditions she cherishes: "respect for elders, parents, and teachers; harmony with nature; worship of ancestors; filial piety." She values her large family and maintains her loyalty to it. Coming to the United States without them was therefore doubly hard. She longed for the beauty of her home country, "its breathtaking scenic views and landmarks, the 'Pearl of the Orient.'" Vietnam is an elegantly S-shaped, mountainous, and tropical landscape where her beloved ancestors are buried.

Ha Long Bay is near the South China Sea. SOURCE: *Vietnam . . . in Pictures*, Visual Geography Series, Lerner Publications Company, Minneapolis, MN, 1994.

236 BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Huong Tran encountered new customs in the United States that contrasted with those for women in Vietnam. Traditionally, Vietnamese men have

> *. . . much more freedom and options than their female counterparts in terms of career choices, courtship practices, hierarchy in the family, inheritance, and social status. Since men are considered primary providers, they tend to choose careers held in high esteem by society, such as medical and dental fields, pharmacy, engineering, computer technology, and law practice. Women, on the other hand, are socialized to believe that if their academic achievement surpasses their male counterparts', they will be viewed as threats. Young women have also been encouraged to be committed to one person, then to get married, rather than to "date" multiple partners. . . . Our differences [from American women] can be described in the way in which we view our role as wife and mother. We are not necessarily "equal" partners to our husbands, since men in our society are still "kings" of their households. The eldest son has great importance in the family; he carries the father's last name and is expected to care for his mother and younger siblings should the father pass away, be out of town on work assignment, or, in many cases, in the military on the battlefields. In many families, even today, marriages are still arranged. Though many young men and women do not particularly like it, they conform to their parents' wishes. Women are expected to bear children when they marry, or the in-laws will be quite unhappy. Mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law can be at odds with one another, especially if the couple has different religious beliefs, social status, and wealth. Interracial marriages are often discouraged, and even frowned upon, especially in the more rural communities. Mixed-race children have a difficult time being accepted by either culture.*

Huong Tran is nevertheless struck by the basic similarities between American women and Vietnamese women.

> *We are nurturing mothers and wives concerned with our family's happiness, primarily responsible for holding our family together, being on top of family finances and expenditures, checking our children's schoolwork, grades, school-related commitments, holiday events, being the family's "taxi," and more!*

Physical separation from ancestors in Vietnam is very hard for many Vietnamese refugees. Huong Tran expresses deep love for her maternal grandmother's resourcefulness and courage. Widowed and pregnant with Huong Tran's mother at nineteen, her grandmother survived the occupation of Hanoi (where she lived in northern Vietnam) by Japanese troops.

> *All of our rice was shipped back to Japan, all books in libraries burned, men executed, women assaulted in front of their husbands and families, then forced into prostitution under the term* comfort women. *The Japanese invasion caused mass starvation, genocide, suicide, family uproar, emotional and psychological turmoil. . . . My grandmother survived by applying lots of turmeric all over herself from head to toe so that she would appear as though she was jaundiced by hepatitis.*

Vietnamese rice fields. Artwork by Joanna Roy. SOURCE: *Look What We've Brought You from Vietnam,* Phyllis Shalant, Julfan Messner Publishers, New York, NY, 1988.

Huong Tran was joined by her family, who left Vietnam in 1975 with the first postwar wave of refugees from Saigon. She married a South Vietnamese jet fighter pilot who had been, for a time, a prisoner of war. A year after her reunion with her family, Huong Tran earned her bachelor of arts degree (with honors) from San Diego State University. Two months after the birth of her first son, she earned a master's degree in curriculum and supervision. She also earned a credential as a language development specialist.

Huong Tran's father lost everything when he left Vietnam: his homes, his work, and his country. He fought despair by channeling all his energy into work. He started a new and successful construction company and, after five years of residence in the United States, he and his whole family applied for citizenship.

The day of the citizenship ceremony was particularly difficult. We stood there with hundreds of soon-to-be citizens, waving the tiny American flag, tears in our eyes, pain in heart, for giving up our Vietnamese citizenship to adopt our new homeland.

Huong Tran learned that "the process of assimilation and acculturation is a lengthy and often isolated one." It helps to share the experience with others who "can empathize with your struggle and share their stories of glory, triumph, trial, and error." She advises others to "learn from each experience and rise above it." As her father said to her, "If life gave you a lemon, make lemonade with it!"

She advises that students can

. . . help immigrants by putting yourself "in the position" of these individuals. Try to understand the challenges which they are facing. Imagine yourself being in a totally different country where the language of communication, educational system, customs, traditions, way of life, religious beliefs are alien from your own. Understand that your [immigrant] classmates and neighbors are striving to learn the English language and adapt to the majority culture, processes which demand much time, effort, and support from others. Try to be a good friend.

HUONG TRAN NGUYEN

DIRECTIONS

1. Read the summaries of the interview with Huong Tran Nguyen.

2. Discuss with classmates the following questions based on Huong Tran Nguyen's story:

   - Have you ever experienced homesickness? How did you get through it? Did you find some ways to comfort yourself so you could get by?

   - Watch five or six typical American television shows and imagine the impression they would give of life in America if *you* had never been to the United States. Do they give an accurate picture of how we really live? What exaggerations or misrepresentations might a refugee hoping to arrive here encounter in these shows?

   - If your name were as beautiful as Huong Tran's ("Autumn Fragrance"), would you be willing to give it up?

   - Are there nationalities whose names are hard for you to pronounce? List some names that are Asian and some that are not. Analyze what makes these names hard for you to say. Is part of the problem just that they're unfamiliar or that you don't understand "how they work"? Later in this unit, you will learn more about Vietnamese names.

   - Would it be difficult for a Vietnamese family, especially one where both parents need to work in order to support the children, to adapt to the different customs of the United States? Who might experience stress?

   - Are there times in your family when your ideas about the roles traditionally assigned to men and women diverge from those of other family members?

THANH VAN ANDERSON

Thanh Van Anderson became a classroom teacher after earning college degrees in the United States. She currently works at the Oklahoma Department of Education. She was also appointed by former United States Secretary of Education William Bennett to the National Advisory and Coordinating Council on Bilingual Education. She earned a bachelor of science degree in elementary education and a master's degree in educational administration from the University of Central Oklahoma. She is now a doctoral candidate at Oklahoma State University.

Like Huong Tran Nguyen, Thanh came to the United States alone, by plane, a few years later, in 1973. She, however, was able to join her sister, Phan, who already lived in Phoenix, Arizona. Thanh and many of her relatives worked with the United States Army in Vietnam, and she fell in love with an American soldier. They were already engaged when she left for the United States to continue her education, hoping to be reunited once war-related commitments were fulfilled.

The journey was very long and frightening. I had never flown before and was very apprehensive. Would the plane fall into the ocean? I had learned English as my third language, but still had trouble communicating. I was afraid people would laugh at my heavy accent and incorrect grammar. I sat by the window and looked out before our departure from Saigon. I thought Vietnam was a poor country, but I loved it more than ever before. I couldn't believe that those banana trees and the wood houses had become so valuable to me. I thought what will happen if I can never come back; what if I never see my father, sisters, or brother again? It terrified me so much that I burst into tears. I stared at those trees and houses, wanting to take the picture with me forever. I still have that picture within me. The tears flowed for hours.

The excitement of reuniting with Phan and her husband after a five-year separation cheered Thanh.

As I walked out of the plane, there was my sister and her husband: the safety net I needed. The airport was so beautiful; everything was so very clean. Leaving the airport I saw lovely homes set apart, so neatly, pretty mountains, with large homes and so much room for each house!

Then disappointment came as we passed through a poor neighborhood. I noticed small frame wood houses. How could this be? I asked my sister how could people living in the United States be so poor? Was education not free and weren't there many jobs? She told me that not everyone wanted to get an education and not everyone wanted to work. Therefore, they couldn't buy the better things in life.

Thanh noticed other things as well.

I noticed there were no ambulances, sirens, no bombs and rockets; it was so quiet. I had known there was no war in the United States. However, having grown up in Vietnam, where war and the sounds of war became part of the subconscious mind, I couldn't believe it was that peaceful.

Thanh attributes her success in America not only to the education she earned but also to continued support from her husband, sister; the Wilsons, an American family who acted as temporary adoptive parents to her; and her professors, colleagues, and friends. Another key person in her life is her father, who taught her "the meaning of honesty, dignity, loyalty, and persistence."

It wasn't always smooth sailing, however. Thanh encountered considerable prejudice among some of her classmates in school, who based their idea of Vietnam on stereotypes and distortions in the media and on American disillusionment with wartime events. Like Huong Tran Nguyen, she encountered resistance from a professor who felt that it was too ambitious for a first-generation immigrant to embark on a doctoral program. But Thanh decided "not [to] allow people of little minds to dictate or control my life."

In the years after her marriage, Thanh sponsored her family's immigration to the United States:

> *. . . three sisters and a brother have graduated with engineering degrees. They are now employed and prosperous. Nowhere else in the world could this have happened except in the United States. The Vietnamese Asian culture has been successfully integrated into our family life. My husband has been and still is a supporter of the Asian family culture. All my family lived with us while going to college and until marriage, demonstrating how the Asian culture has affected our lifestyle in the United States.*

Thanh shares Huong Tran's opinions about the differences between gender roles in Vietnamese families and American families. She, too, remarks that Vietnamese families are male-centered.

> *Women cannot work outside the home unless they have accomplished [their traditional tasks as wives and mother], and then only if the husband approves. Vietnamese culture is "male-dominated" and change isn't likely.*

THANH VAN ANDERSON

DIRECTIONS

1. Read the summaries of the interview with Thanh Van Anderson.

2. Discuss with classmates the following questions based on Thanh Van Anderson's story:

   - What other factors do you think contribute to the differences Thanh noticed between one neighborhood and another in America?

   - What do you believe education and hard work can and can't ensure for American citizens? Make a list.

   - Ideas about how men and women should act, what they can do successfully, and should do out of duty vary from culture to culture and from time to time. Can you think of some periods in American history when attitudes about gender roles were closer to the ones Thanh describes? How might Vietnamese families need to adjust their traditional gender roles if the predictable economic pressures of being a refugee family require that both men *and women* in the family work for pay outside the home? What would the costs and benefits be for a Vietnamese family in such a situation?

MARY JO THU NGUYEN

Mary Jo Thu Nguyen didn't arrive in the United States until 1983, almost ten years after the end of the Vietnam War. Her son was a "boat person" who took the risk of setting out from Vietnam on one of many small boats overloaded with refugees seeking freedom from persecution at home.

If you look at the map of Vietnam below and some of the neighboring countries accessible by water, you can plot various possible routes boat people might have taken. All routes were enormously dangerous and frightening. Many boat people were robbed, raped, or killed by Thai pirates, or drowned when their rickety boats capsized or sank. Many starved to death or died from dehydration and disease on the journey.

Luckily for Mary Jo, her son made it to America, in October 1981, as an "unaccompanied minor." She and her two daughters were able to leave later, more safely, under the terms of the "Orderly Departure" program the United States arranged with Communist-ruled Vietnam to facilitate the exit of many persons seeking asylum in the United States. Mary Jo had, in the preceding years, lost everything she owned. Before 1975 she had been a registered pharmacist and director of her own pharmaceutical company in Saigon, as well as a teacher at the Medical School of the

SOURCE: *Southeast Asian Americans*, Maher and Selwyn, Turman Publishing Co., Seattle, WA, 1995.

University of Saigon. But her marriage was unhappy, and to escape mistreatment at home and at work, she resigned and filed for divorce. In the process she "lost three big pieces of land in Saigon and in the suburban areas; all my money in my savings bank account, and a happy family life." To pay for her son's boat ticket, Mary Jo also had to sell all her jewelry. But she "cried tears of joy" when she learned of her son's safe arrival and that she could avoid exposing her daughters to the dangers of a similar passage out of the country by sea.

> *Our journey to the U.S. was very interesting. We (my two daughters and I) left Tan Son Nhut Airport of Saigon on April 7, 1983, and arrived to Panat-Nikhom Refugee Camp in Bangkok in the evening of the same day. The following morning I was chosen to be the Camp Leader to interpret, translate, and explain the camp regulations to 102 refugee families as well as to manage the food distribution for them. We stayed in Panat Nikhom for seven days to get all the paperwork and immunization shots completed. As the Group Leader, I led my group to New York City safely on April 15, 1983.*
>
> *When I saw the Statue of Liberty again this time (since I had been in New York the first time in June 1962 when I was on a student vacation trip) I suddenly felt the salty fluid on my lips and my tongue. I knew that I was crying the tears of joy and of homesickness. I whispered to myself, "Good-bye Saigon, Vietnam," and held tightly*

my two daughters in my arms to transfer my strength to them. I told myself, "Thu, you got to start from a big zero." My tears dried when I saw the happy smiles blooming on my daughters' faces, since every new thing was beautiful and fascinating to them. "Thanks God they feel that way at the beginning of a new life in the USA," I talked to myself. Then the USCC Agent came and gave us warm clothes, and we flew to our next destination, Washington National Airport. When we landed, I saw my brother-in-law waiting at the gate to drive us home to meet my sister and my son. What a happiness to be reunited!

Mary Jo calls America "the land of opportunities" and her "second homeland, the land of full development of my three children." Nevertheless, on arriving in America she was shocked to see the increase in homeless people in the Washington, D.C., neighborhood where she had lived as a student in 1960 to 1961. Supported by her family and local government organizations, Mary Jo soon found ways to support her children. What was different in America was that she was the breadwinner for her family, not just because she *wanted* to be, but now because she had to be! She attributes her success to a spirit of teamwork, maintaining family traditions of respect and obedience in her united family, and an ability to find positive outcomes that are compromises based on imagining others' points of view.

Mary Jo missed traditional Vietnamese holidays celebrated on a national scale. One of the best parts of the Vietnamese New Year's celebration of Tet is that all family members stay home to enjoy the spring spirit and give offerings to ancestors *together*. This was impossible in the United States, since Tet is not nationally recognized, and family members are expected to be at their jobs.

Mary Jo notices changes for Vietnamese women who live in America. Although some stay home and play more traditional roles of

child rearing after their families achieve some economic stability, most do not. She points out that in Vietnam, men would have given their salaries to their wives to budget and spend on the family, but in America, because many Vietnamese women have fewer English-language skills than their husbands, they often are unable to play this traditional role. "In brief, the role of a female immigrant has become heavier since she has to work and also take care of the family and children."

Today, Mary Jo works two jobs she's proud of because they both serve the needs of the disadvantaged. She is a case manager, and also a registered pharmacist at a pharmacy. She had to work very hard to achieve this success, despite the fact that she was an outstanding student from an early age. Her excellence won her a leadership scholarship from Vietnam when she was very young, enabling her to study in the United States from 1960 to 1963. When she went back to Vietnam, she earned a degree in education in 1965 and another in pharmacy in 1973, from the University of Saigon. But when she arrived as a refugee in 1983, becoming recertified to practice pharmacy in the United States required that she return to school. First, however, she had to raise her children. After all three finished their medical degrees, she went back to school to earn a registered pharmacist degree in Maryland. Mary Jo is understandably proud of what her family has accomplished since "starting from big zero" in a new land.

When she has more free time, Mary Jo hopes to write an English-language book about her experience as a Vietnamese American. When she got her American citizenship, she was "happy and proud of myself because I want to be part of this country, to cherish, to serve, and to enjoy life here for the rest of my life." Nevertheless, she hopes one day to visit Vietnam as a tourist, "when no communism exists." She wants to travel more in the United States, too.

Vietnamese boat on the Perfume River in Central Vietnam. SOURCE: *Vietnam . . . in Pictures*, Visual Geography Series, Lerner Publications Company, Minneapolis, MN, 1994.

MARY JO THU NGUYEN

DIRECTIONS

1. Read the summaries of the interview with Mary Jo Thu Nguyen.

2. Discuss with classmates the following questions based on Mary Jo Thu Nguyen's story:

   - How might the dangerous experiences of escaping from Vietnam by boat affect the success of refugees attempting to build a new life in the United States? Would it be hard to put memories and bad dreams behind?

   - What kinds of social services might be required by persons who had endured such stress and trauma? How could these costly services be funded?

   - What do you know about Tet, the Vietnamese New Year? Do you know of other groups of people in the United States who celebrate holidays that most people around them don't recognize or even understand? What challenges would this situation present?

   - Do you know other immigrant groups who regularly take jobs in the United States well below the level of status their professional degrees in their home countries made possible there? What would motivate adults to make such sacrifices in a new country? How would this affect family relationships?

NHA NGUYEN

JOURNEY FROM VIETNAM

I came to the U.S. from Vietnam in 1981, when I was thirty years old. I came with my daughter Tran and settled in Biloxi, Mississippi. I left my country because there was no future. The life was real difficult at that time. I took care of my mother's jewelry store every single day, and I was worried that police would come and get me or whatever they wanted, such as gold or money, because there was no real law in the country.

I left Saigon at 2:00 P.M. on a delivery truck and traveled overnight to Baclieu the next morning. They put us (twelve people) in a room about twelve feet long by twelve feet wide. We ate and used the bathroom in the same room, and waited until outside was dark so we could get out to stretch. In the middle of the night, they woke us up and put us in a small boat. It traveled on the river to another city. From there, we had to walk in the mud for five long hours to reach a bigger boat so we could get out of the country. That was when I had to deal with a difficult time. However, I didn't have anything in my mind except leaving until we landed in Malaysia. I knew I would miss my country very much. I cried because I knew I would never get back there again.

CHALLENGES AND SUPPORT IN THE UNITED STATES

The most impressive thing to me when I came to the U.S. was the way people who worked in the Catholic church treated me so well. Although they weren't Vietnamese people, they cared and gave us equality. When I was in Mississippi, I was treated differently because I was Asian. I knew that some people discriminated against immigrants very strongly, so I just walked away.

FROM VIETNAM
TO MISSISSIPPI

The biggest challenge I faced when I first came to the U.S. was my English. I knew how to write and read, but I couldn't understand what people were saying or talking so it was hard for me to find a job. My father gave me the strength and support to come to the U.S. so I could build a new life for me and my child.

TRADITIONS AND CULTURE

I want to keep my native culture, such as respecting older people, keeping family members close together, helping other people when they need help. I miss our foods, scenery, and relatives who are still back in Vietnam.

Vietnamese women are expected to please their husbands, ask when they can go out, and cook and take care of the whole family. The woman who has been influential in my life is my mother. She taught me to give, to help, and be strong when I have difficulties in my life.

PLANS AND ADVICE

I had a business degree in Vietnam, but I became a saleslady for my mother's store. Now I am a manicurist. The special interest I have now is to see my daughter graduate from college, to have a good job, to be treated equally, and to happily become a part of people in the U.S.

My advice for new immigrants is that life will always be difficult in the beginning in a new country. But we have to work hard to overcome it, to be successful. Every one of us has to get through it sooner or later in life to make us a better person.

A family makes banh-chung, or bean cakes, for the celebration of Tet. SOURCE: *Vietnam . . . in Pictures,* Visual Geography Series, Lerner Publications Company, Minneapolis, MN, 1994.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

NHA NGUYEN

DIRECTIONS

After reading the interview with Nha Nguyen, complete the following activities:

1. Discuss how Nha Nguyen's journey from Vietnam was different from the journeys of the other Vietnamese women interviewed.

2. Read more about the end of the war in Vietnam and about the experiences of people who had to escape from their country in boats. Imagine and discuss what your feelings would be if you had journeyed in one of those boats. Find out more about the experiences and hardships of other groups of people who have journeyed on boats or ships to this country. Read about passages on slave ships, about ships of refugees coming from Europe during and after World War II, and about the current experiences of people trying to come to the United States from Cuba and Haiti.

3. Discuss how experiences for women and men in Nha Nguyen's family might have been similar and different, both in Vietnam and in the United States. Also discuss how Nha Nguyen's father and mother both influenced her.

4. Write two questions that you would like to ask Nha Nguyen about her life and her experiences as an immigrant.

   (1)

   (2)

VOICES FROM VIETNAM

DIRECTIONS

1. Discuss the following questions with your classmates:

   - If any of the women interviewed in this unit went back to Vietnam today or in the future, would they be able to resume the life they left behind?
   - Do you have places you remember fondly from the past that you would like to revisit?
   - How does love affect our memories of places we were forced to abandon by circumstance or time?

2. Look at a video that gives you a good sense of how beautiful Vietnam and the rest of Indochina (Vietnam, Cambodia—now called Kampuchea—and Laos) are, and perhaps you will be able to sense why the experience of the Vietnamese American is so deeply touched by nostalgia and a sense of loss as well as discovery and gratitude for a safer and free new country.

Lush rice fields in northern Vietnam. SOURCE: *Vietnam . . . in Pictures*, Visual Geography Series, Lerner Publications Company, Minneapolis, MN, 1994.

DUST OF LIFE

The Amerasians in Vietnam, sometimes called *buidoi*, dust of life, are children of Vietnamese mothers and American fathers. Many have lived lives of great hardship; most were left behind by departing American soldiers. From 1982 to 1988, only 4,500 Amerasians were resettled in the United States with relatives. Those who remained behind served as reminders of a painful past to those who ultimately unified Vietnam.

After years of lobbying by concerned groups, the American government initiated the Amerasian Homecoming Program in 1987, twelve years after the last American troops left Vietnam. This program was created to expedite the exit of 27,000 Amerasians, most of whom were then about twelve to twenty years old. The deadline was extended to 1991, and the estimated number of eligible Amerasian immigrants grew to 81,000. Very few were able to locate their American fathers and have had, instead, to construct new lives on their own in a strange new land.

Not all American fathers of Amerasian children left them behind. The following memoir, "On the Other Side of the War: A Story," by Elizabeth Gordon, recalls her own and her Vietnamese mother's experiences with her American father in West Virginia after the war.

Vietnamese children. SOURCE: *Vietnam . . . in Pictures,* Visual Geography Series, Lerner Publications Company, Minneapolis, MN, 1994.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

"ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WAR: A STORY"
BY ELIZABETH GORDON

I. THE WAY WE CAME TO AMERICA

The way we came to America was this: my father, who was in the army, made an overseas call to his mom and dad in West Virginia.

"Listen," he said, "I've decided to adopt this poor little Vietnamese baby and bring her to America. What do you think?"

Now, both Grandma and Grandpa were true hillbillies in their lineage, habits, and mental faculties—which means they were as broke, as stubborn, and as sharp as folks can be. Not that my father's story required much genius to be seen right through. A twenty-four-year-old enlisted man wanting to bring home some mysterious oriental infant? They hadn't brought him up that good.

"It's all right, Skip," they told him. "You can get married, if you love her, and bring 'em both. Bring 'em both on home."

II. NO ONE HAD EXPECTED

No one had expected anything like this to happen, least of all the people it happened to.

My father had been quite prepared to meet and marry a sweet girl with a name like Layuna or Ginny Lee. A girl who hailed from one of the good neighboring towns of Beckley or Rainelle. A girl with a daddy like his, who liked to work on cars, who'd every once in a while hit the booze and start cursing about black lung. There's been no Nguyen Ngoc Huong from Saigon in his crystal ball.

SOURCE: "On the Other Side of the War: A Story," Elizabeth Gordon. First published in *Home to Stay: Asian American Women's Fiction*, Sylvia Watanabe and Carol Bruchac, eds., The Greenfield Review Press, Greenfield Center, NY, 1980.

And my mother never dreamed she'd live in an aluminum house on wheels, or see shaved ice swirling down from the sky. Her kitchen window looked out onto a pasture of cows, who stood utterly still with the weather piling up around their legs. It was a difficult thing for her to understand.

So while my father was out climbing telephone poles for Ma Bell, my mother was in the trailer with me, crying and crying for the cows who had not a plank against the cold.

III. THINGS GOT MIXED UP

Things got mixed up sometimes between them. Though it was my father's unshakable belief that Common Sense prevailed in all circumstances, he seemed to forget that Common Sense is commonly rendered senseless whenever it crosses a few time zones.

For example, my mother would constantly confuse "hamburger" with "pancake," presumably because both were round, flat, and fried in a pan. So my father, after asking for his favorite breakfast, would soon smell the juicy aroma of sizzling ground beef coming from the kitchen. Other times, he'd find a stack of well-buttered flapjacks, along with a cold bottle of Coca-Cola, waiting for him at the dinner table.

One morning, before my father left for work, he asked my mother to make corn bread and pinto beans for supper. The result of this request was that my mother spent the remainder of the day peeling, one by one, an entire pound of pinto beans. How could she have known any better?

When my father returned home that night, he found her with ten sore fingers and a pot full of mush. He didn't know whether to laugh or cry, but he kissed her because there was nothing he could say.

IV. THE PHOTOGRAPH

The photograph, circa 1965, is somewhat unusual. In the background there is a row of neat, nearly identical houses. The street in front of the houses is spacious and clean, as wholesome and as decent as sunshine.

Up a little closer, there is a car. It's a two-tone Chevy with curvaceous fenders, gleaming as though it's just been washed and waxed by hand. The weather looks like Sunday.

In the foreground, not unexpectedly, a woman with a small child. The woman is a wife because she wears a gold ring. She is also a mother because of the way she holds her child.

The woman has a slim, dainty figure. Her smile is wide and loose, as though she is close to laughter. Maybe her husband, who is taking her picture, is telling a joke or making a silly face. It seems quite natural that the photographer is the husband. Who else would it be?

But something in the photograph is not quite right. Strangers often tilt their heads when looking at it, as if it is uncomfortable to view straight up and down. Possibly, it's the incomparable blackness of the woman's hair, the way it seems forced into a wave it can barely hold. Or maybe it has something to do with the baby's eyes which, though blue, are shaped exactly like the woman's: round at the center, narrow at the corners, and heavy-lidded.

What are eyes like that doing among frame houses and a shiny Chevrolet? It seems a reasonable thing to ask.

V. WHEN I STARTED SCHOOL

When I started school there were numerous forms to be filled out. Some of the questions were so simple, I could have answered them myself.

The task belonged to my mother, though. She handled most of the questions with ease, and I liked to watch the way she filled all those boxes and blanks with her pretty handwriting.

There was one question, however, that gave my mother a lot of trouble. Even though it was multiple choice, none of the answers seemed to fit. She decided to ask my father what to do.

He didn't have an answer right away, and for some reason that made him angry. The problem was, I was supposed to be in a race, but he couldn't figure out which one.

Finally, he told my mother to put an "H" in that blank. "For human *race," he said.*

I didn't understand what that meant, back then. But it sounded like a good race to me.

DUST OF LIFE

DIRECTIONS

After reading the excerpt from "On the Other Side of the War" by Elizabeth Gordon, discuss the following questions with your classmates:

1. What point is the author making when she says, "... it [human race] sounded like a good race to me"?

2. Do you think teachers were surprised when Elizabeth's mother came to parent conferences at school?

3. Would her name have given them any hint that her mother was from Vietnam?

4. What point is this story making about names and the power to name?

"THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL" BY TRUONG ANH THUY

Today you started school
Carrying your lunchbag
You looked so sad and ready to cry
Helpless, my child, so sweet!

I took you to class
You held back, not wanting to go in
The teacher came to the door
Smiled and shook hands

Walking after her, not quite willing
Your feet felt like lead
You turned back and glanced at me
As if you plead, "Please don't leave."

I barely dared to sit down
On a chair in a corner
Surreptitiously you looked back
Your eyes brimming

At day's end I came back
Happy to take you home
You grabbed me and did not let go
Tears overflowing your eyes:

"I won't go back to school
"I have no one to play with
"I spoke Vietnamese
"And the whole class burst out laughing."

SOURCE: Excerpt from "A Mother's Lullaby," translated by Nguyen Ngoc Bich, in *Work and Exile: A Vietnamese Anthology*, Nguyen Ngoc Bich, ed., Vietnamese PEN, East Coast VISA, San Francisco, CA, 1989.

Rotten I felt inside
But I still had to say:
"What a bad boy you are!
"Your brothers acted much better.

"You will learn English
"You will get many friends
"They speak one language
"But you will speak two."

Tonight before going to sleep
You turned and tossed
Caressing you, I said:
"You'll get used to it."

The first time you're away
From Mother and Dad, Grandma, Grandpa
You must feel like the sky
Is tumbling down, the earth upturned.

The other day you asked:
"Does the teacher like me?
"Who are my friends?
"Are they like me?

"How will I say
"That I want to eat, to drink?
"When I must go to the bathroom
"If by chance I wet my pants?"

Sisters Trung Trac and Trung Nhi spearheaded a rebellion against Chinese rule in A.D. 39. SOURCE: *Vietnam . . . in Pictures*, Visual Geography Series, Lerner Publications Company, Minneapolis, MN, 1994.

O such wisdom at such young age!
How did you know how to take care of yourself?
Thinking of your tender age
I am lost in dream . . .

Suddenly seeing you distracted
By posters on the wall
I quickly ran to the door
And slipped outside.

"You are different from the class
"Because you are Vietnamese
"That's what we have been
"For thousands of years

"Your ancestors are Nguyen Trai
"Le Loi and Quang Trung
"Remember the story of Hoa Lu and Thanh Giong?
"The shining examples of Trieu and Trung?"

Suddenly you shook my arm:
"Yes! I remember now
"The story of Rush Battle
"And Phu Dong who went to the sky

"I will tell them all
"So they won't dare . . . laugh."
Your voice then trailed off
Snoring away, you're fast asleep.

Vietnamese general Tran Hung Dao, who defeated the army of the Mogols in 1287. SOURCE: *Vietnam . . . in Pictures*, Visual Geography Series, Lerner Publications Company, Minneapolis, MN, 1994.

"THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL" BY TRUONG ANH THUY

DIRECTIONS

Read the poem, "The First Day of School," and complete the following activities.

1. Discuss these questions:

   - How did the child in the poem feel about his first day of school? What happened to make him feel that way?
   - What advice did the mother give her son?
   - What advice would you give a younger sister, brother, cousin, or friend when they were about to start a new school? What advice would you give to a friend who was moving to a new country and starting school there?

Vietnamese students during the country's colonial era (late 1800s). SOURCE: *Vietnam . . . in Pictures*, Visual Geography Series, Lerner Publications Company, Minneapolis, MN, 1994.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

2. Imagine that you are going to a new school in a country where you don't know the language. Discuss, draw, or write about your first day in school. How did you feel? What questions did you have and how did you ask those questions and understand the answers? What happened to make you feel welcome or unwelcome?

3. Find out more about the Vietnamese individuals mentioned in the poem, such as Nguyen Trai, Le Loi, Hoa Lu, and Thanh Giong. If you were going to tell a student from another country about famous people in U.S. history or in the history of your ancestors, whom would you choose? List three women and three men from history (or names of characters from books that you have read) that you would like a new student to learn about.

WOMEN	*MEN*
•	•
•	•
•	•

4. Remember a situation where you felt lonely, afraid, or embarrassed in school. Discuss your feelings in a small group. Draw a cartoon or picture about your feelings.

NAMES AND HOLIDAYS

Asian names can present a challenge for some people who have grown up in the United States. They may look hard to pronounce and unfamiliar. Some common Vietnamese last names are Nguyen, Mai, and Le. Usually, a Vietnamese person's surname (last name) is written first, then her middle name, and last, her given (first) name. How would your name sound if you re-ordered it the Vietnamese way? What accommodation to Western patterns of naming do you predict many Vietnamese families make, in order not to confuse people who keep school and job records? Would you feel funny if you had to re-order *your* own name on a permanent basis?

Also, in Vietnam, because of respect for a person and his or her ancestors, people would not address a person named Huynh Dinh Te as Mr. Huynh. Instead, they would call him Mr. Te or Te.

You learned earlier in this chapter that Vietnamese names often have a poetic and literary meaning that calls to mind a lovely image that has great significance for a family, and power to bring good fortune to an individual. For example, Huong Tran *Nguyen*'s full given name is Thu Huong, which means "Autumn Fragrance." Explore the meaning of names, and patterns in names, in other Asian nationalities, for example, *Park* Kyung Ran (Korean), or *Chon* Bow Sing (Chinese).

Another challenge for many persons unfamiliar with Asian names is determining gender. In fact, once you become more familiar with Asian names, by reading books and interviewing people, recognizing which names are assigned to which gender becomes a lot less mysterious over time. Some Asian Americans adopt or add new names that make calling on them in school easier for

their friends and teachers. They may be Sally in school and Sau at home. Would you get confused if you had one name in school and another one as soon as you walked in the door at home?

Finally, people who are not Asian may wonder why so many people from a particular country may share such an apparently small number of surnames. This has to do with the great emphasis placed in most Asian cultures on respect for ancestors and family. People take great pride in being members of the Nguyen family, the Huynh family, the Vinh family, and so forth.

One way to share in another person's culture is to learn about her or his holidays and how they are celebrated. Tet, or Vietnamese New Year, celebrates the return of spring, a predictably joyous time in a society with agricultural roots. It usually falls between January 19 and February 20, on the first day of the first month of the lunar calendar. It is truly centered in the family, and is a kind of mega-holiday, for paying debts, making resolutions for self-improvement, forgiving others, and moving beyond past hardships and sorrows. It's important for the house to be carefully cleaned, even repainted, and decorated with flowers, banners, and flags. The holiday lasts three days and includes a range of activities: paying homage to ancestors through prayer, honoring teachers and mentors, and finally, a day for visiting and general merriment and feasting on traditional Vietnamese foods, such as stuffed vegetables. Children may receive red envelopes containing money, firecrackers may enliven the festivities, and family members may dress in traditional Vietnamese outfits and play traditional Vietnamese music on Vietnamese instruments.

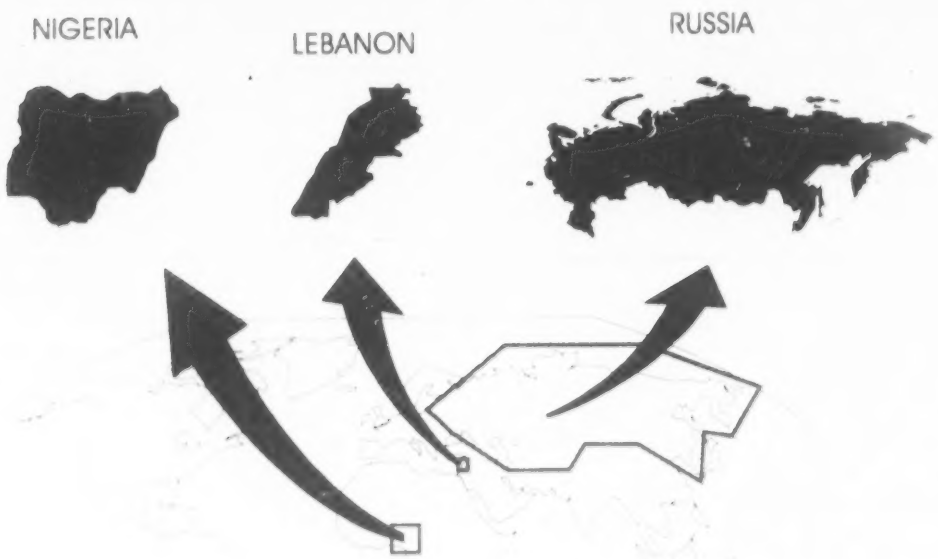
Tet firecrackers in Hanoi. SOURCE: *Vietnam . . . in Pictures*, Visual Geography Series, Lerner Publications Company, Minneapolis, MN, 1994.

NAMES AND HOLIDAYS

DIRECTIONS

1. Read the information in this unit about names and holidays.

2. Do some research in the library on how names work in other countries such as Russia, Lebanon, Nigeria. Report back to the class on issues such as the order of the parts of the name, aspects of the names that are hard to pronounce or understand. Pick a holiday you know very little about and research it. Report back to the class about what this holiday shows about the people who celebrate it.



SELECTED STUDENT RESOURCES

BOOKS

A Boat to Nowhere, Maureen Crane Wartski, Signet Books, New York, NY, 1980. Age 11 and up. This story focuses on the exciting, eventful journey of an orphaned young girl, her brother, and grandfather, and another orphan, a fourteen-year-old boy. The boy learns to love by assisting in their escape from the communist victors of the war in Vietnam, who come to impose "order" on the remote village previously relatively untouched by war.

Dan Thuy's New Life in America, Karen O'Connor, Lerner Publications Company, Minneapolis, MN, 1992. Easy reading. Photographs illustrate the day-to-day activities of thirteen-year-old Dan Thuy Huynh and her family in Southern California.

The Face in My Mirror, Maureen Crane Wartski, Fawcett Juniper (Ballantine Books), New York, 1994. Age 11 and up. An adopted Vietnamese teenager experiences an ugly racial incident in her home town in Iowa. She goes to rediscover her past by searching out her biological aunt in Boston.

Goodbye Vietnam, Gloria Whelan, Random House (Bullseye Books), New York, NY, 1992. Age 10 and up. This novel recounts the story of two refugee girls and their families, from two different social classes. The book includes a vivid portrait of life in a refugee camp and is suspenseful and moving.

Onion Tears, Diana Kidd, Franklin Watts, Inc. (Orchard Books), New York, NY, 1993. Age 10 and up. Set in Australia, this beautifully told story discusses the pain of a Vietnamese refugee girl's separation from her parents and siblings. Having survived the "boat person" experience, the girl is threatened with the loss of her teacher. This frees her to describe her agonized adventure and to establish new relationships in a new land.

Song of the Buffalo Boy, Sherry Garland, Harcourt Brace and Company, New York, NY, 1992. Age 11 and up. This novel vividly portrays the fate of an Amerasian girl who befriends a boy hoping to emigrate from Vietnam by pretending to be Amerasian. Her adventures lead to an unexpected ending.

Personal Journeys and Stories

CONCLUSION: WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THIS BOOK?

It is good to have an end to journey towards;
but it is the journey that matters in the end.

—Ursula K. LeGuin
Writer

By reading this book and completing its activities, you have taken a single step in learning about the journeys of some women from many cultures who have contributed to modern U.S. history. You have read the personal stories of Native American and Hawaiian women, of Gullah women, of activist women from the South, and of immigrant women from several countries. You have seen that the word "journey" may mean moving from one place to another, or it may mean choosing and following a certain path in your life.

Now it is time to think about what you have learned, and what stories you would like to tell about your own life and the lives of your family and people in your community. It is time to learn more about women's contributions by using interviews, books, videos, museums, and the Internet. It is time to think about what personal journeys you might like to take and what paths you might like to explore.

On the following pages, take some time to reflect on what you have learned, and write or draw your thoughts. You might also want to create a play, an audio tape, a display, or a video about your learning. As you express your ideas and feelings, think about the women whose journeys and stories you just shared, and about the challenges they faced.

As you continue *your* life's journey, remember the strength and courage of these women, and know that you also have the inner strength to overcome obstacles in your life. Remember also the importance of appreciating your journeys, of valuing other people's journeys, and of telling your own stories so that we can all learn from each other.

CIRCLE OF STRENGTH

Each woman profiled or interviewed in *Women's Journeys, Women's Stories* has special strengths that she has demonstrated in her life. Together, these strengths form an unbroken circle.

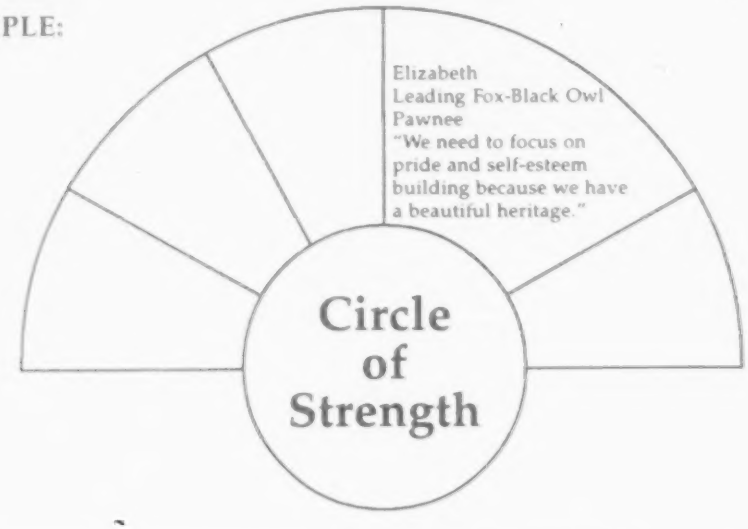
DIRECTIONS

1. In each section of the Circle of Strength on the next page write one woman's **name**, a word noting her **cultural background**, and a quote or **message** from her that is meaningful to you. Use the sample below as a guide.

2. Make a bulletin board display of the Circles of Strength completed by students.

3. Complete a class Circle of Strength by listing each class member's name and having students write their own quotes in their sections of the circle.

EXAMPLE:

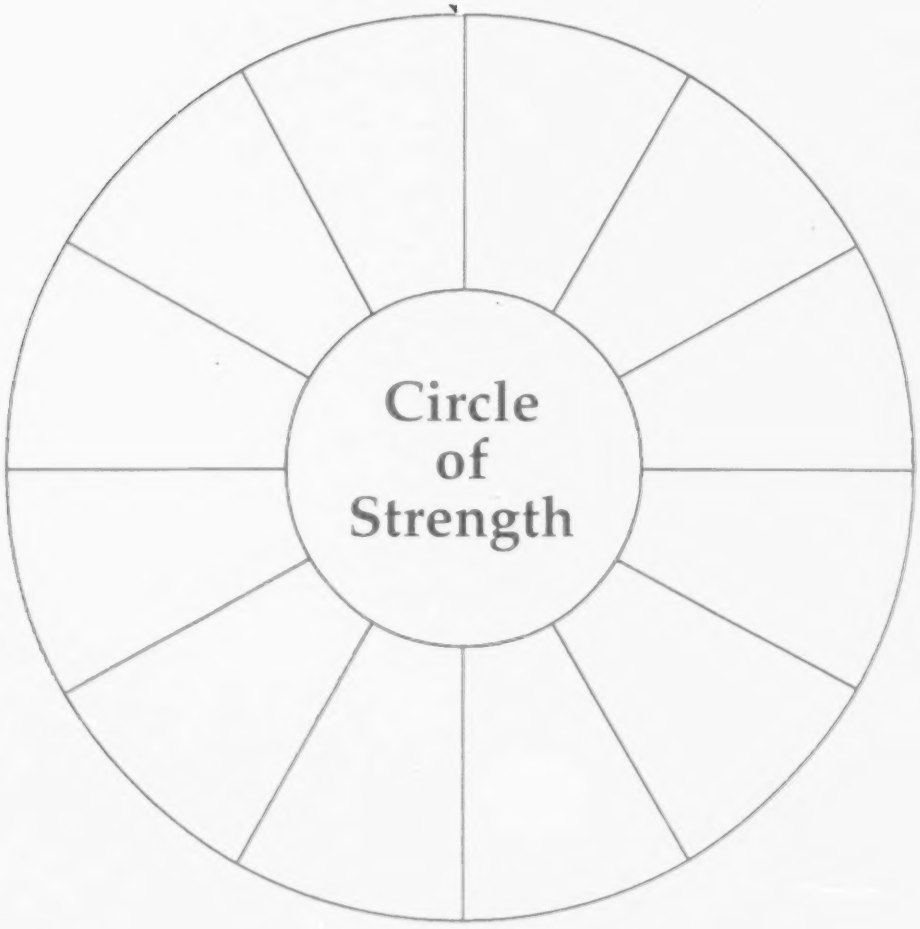

Elizabeth
Leading Fox-Black Owl
Pawnee
"We need to focus on pride and self-esteem building because we have a beautiful heritage."
Circle of Strength

SOURCE: Activity adapted from guide for *Women of Hope* Poster Series, Bread and Roses Cultural Project, 330 West 42nd Street, New York, NY 10036; (212) 631-4565, 1995.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

CIRCLE OF STRENGTH

This circle represents the collective strength of the women profiled or interviewed in *Women's Journeys, Women's Stories*.



SOURCE: Adapted from *Women of Hope* Poster Series, Bread and Roses Cultural Project, 330 West 42nd Street, New York, NY 10036; (212) 631-4565, 1995.

Blank pages to write or draw your questions and reflections about Women's Journeys, Women's Stories *or to record your own journeys and stories.*

Women's Journeys, Women's Stories: In Search of Our Multicultural Future

offers middle and high school students a contemporary multicultural view of U.S. history. With the rich and varied accounts of women whose experiences are often omitted from texts, this curriculum immerses students in stories that fill critical gaps in our nation's history. Continuing the emphasis on oral history of *WEEA's* classic curriculum, *In Search of Our Past: Units in Women's History*, it places the accomplishments and contributions of women from a wide range of ethnic and racial backgrounds firmly in U.S. history.

Curriculum units focus on Native women, including American Indian women and Native Hawaiian women; women of the South, including a section on Gullah women; and an extensive unit on immigrant women, including Latinas, Soviet Jewish women, and Vietnamese women. The *Student Manual* features interviews with and profiles of contemporary women. Suggested activities in the *Teacher Guide* encourage students to explore the experiences of a broad range of individuals. The development team, led by Linda Shevitz, Maryland State Department of Education, and Susan Shaffer, Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium, consists of historians from a wide array of backgrounds and years of experience in women's history. *Women's Journeys, Women's Stories* is a welcome addition to classrooms of new and experienced teachers alike.

> *The utilization of the cultural values and customs as a tool to answer the questions from a personal perspective makes the student reflect before answering. . . . It also motivates them to take risks, not fear things unfamiliar or perceive them as not the norm. . . . I strongly believe* [Women's Journeys, Women's Stories] *is a good effort to get women's voices and contributions in the forefront. There are several perspectives to historical events in this country, and we are in denial if we negate the importance of those views.*
>
> —Iris Outlaw, Director
> Office of Multicultural Student Affairs,
> University of Notre Dame

Also available from the *WEEA* Equity Resource Center at EDC:

In Search of Our Past: Units in Women's History
Sisters in the Blood: The Education of Women in Native America
The Impact of Women on American Education
A Road Well Traveled: Three Generations of Cuban American Women

WEEA Equity Resource Center
Education Development Center, Inc.
55 Chapel Street
Newton, MA 02158-1060
800-225-3088
http://www.edc.org/WomensEquity

#2805

BEST COPY AVAILABLE